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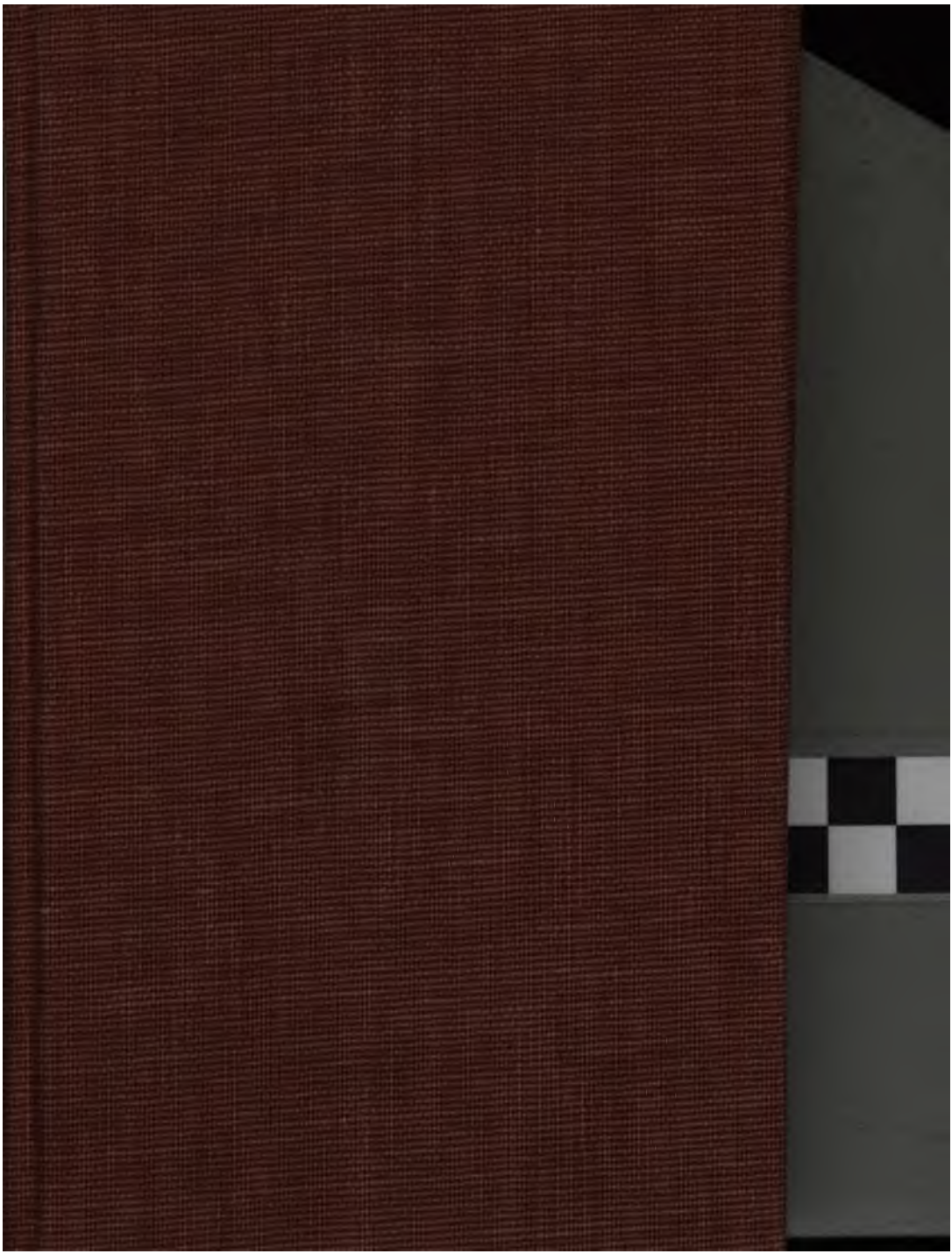

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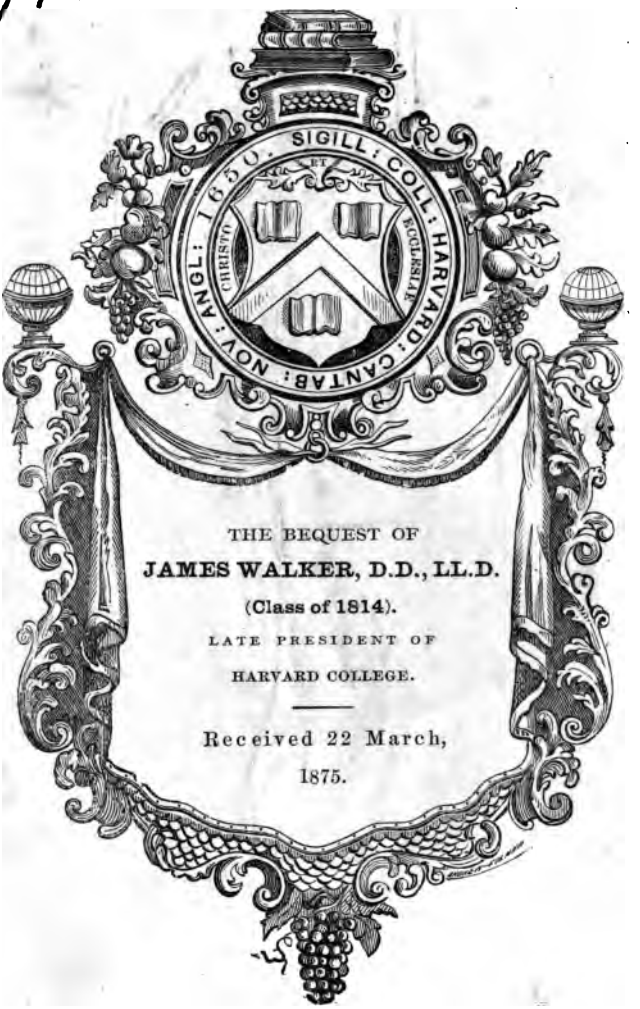

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THE WORKS

OF

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VOL. II.

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THE WORKS

OF

Mrs. ANNA LÆTITIA BARBAULD.

WITH A MEMOIR

By LUCY AIKIN.

Bright-eyed Fancy hovering o'er
Scatters from her pictured urn
Thoughts that breathe and words that burn.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

THE HILL OF SCIENCE.

A VISION.

In that season of the year when the serenity of the sky, the various fruits which cover the ground, the discoloured foliage of the trees, and all the sweet but fading graces of inspiring autumn open the mind to benevolence, and dispose it for contemplation; I was wandering in a beautiful and romantic country, till curiosity began to give way to weariness; and I sat me down on the fragment of a rock overgrown with moss, where the rustling of the falling leaves, the dashing of waters, and the hum of the distant city, soothed my mind into the most perfect tranquillity; and sleep insensibly stole upon me, as I was indulging the agreeable reveries which the objects around me naturally inspired.

I immediately found myself in a vast extended plain, in the middle of which arose a mountain higher than I had before any conception of. It was covered with a multitude of people, chiefly youth; many of whom pressed forwards with the liveliest expression of ardour in their countenance, though the way was in many places steep

and difficult. I observed that those who had but just begun to climb the hill, thought themselves not far from the top: but as they proceeded, new hills were continually rising to their view; and the summit of the highest they could before discern, seemed but the foot of another, till the mountain at length appeared to lose itself in the clouds. As I was gazing on these things with astonishment, my good genius suddenly appeared. "The mountain before thee," said he, "is the hill of Science. On the top is the temple of Truth, whose head is above the clouds, and whose face is covered with a veil of pure light. Observe the progress of her votaries; be silent, and attentive."

I saw that the only regular approach to the mountain was by a gate called the gate of languages. It was kept by a woman of a pensive and thoughtful appearance, whose lips were continually moving, as though she repeated something to herself. Her name was Memory. On entering this first inclosure, I was stunned with a confused murmur of jarring voices and dissonant sounds; which increased upon me to such a degree, that I was utterly confounded, and could compare the noise to nothing but the confusion of tongues at Babel. The road was also rough and stony, and rendered more difficult by heaps of rubbish continually tumbled down from the higher parts of the mountain, and by broken ruins of ancient buildings, which the travellers were obliged to climb over at every step; insomuch that many, disgusted with so rough a beginning, turned back, and attempted the mountain no more: while others, having conquered this difficulty, had no spirits to ascend further, and sitting down on some fragments of the rubbish, harangued the

multitude below with the greatest marks of importance and self-complacency.

About half way up the hill, I observed on each side of the path a thick forest covered with continual fogs, and cut out into labyrinths, cross alleys, and serpentine walks, entangled with thorns and briars. This was called the wood of Error: and I heard the voices of many who were lost up and down in it, calling to one another, and endeavouring in vain to extricate themselves. The trees in many places shot their boughs over the path, and a thick mist often rested on it; yet never so much but that it was discernible by the light which beamed from the countenance of Truth.

In the pleasantest part of the mountain were placed the bowers of the Muses, whose office it was to cheer the spirits of the travellers, and encourage their fainting steps with songs from their divine harps. Not far from hence were the fields of Fiction, filled with a variety of wild flowers springing up in the greatest luxuriance, of richer scents and brighter colours than I had observed in any other climate. And near them was the dark walk of Allegory, so artificially shaded that the light at noonday was never stronger than that of a bright moonshine. This gave it a pleasingly romantic air for those who delighted in contemplation. The paths and alleys were perplexed with intricate windings, and were all terminated with the statue of a Grace, a Virtue, or a Muse.

After I had observed these things, I turned my eyes towards the multitudes who were climbing the steep ascent, and observed amongst them a youth of a lively look, a piercing eye, and something fiery and irregular

in all his motions. His name was Genius. He darted like an eagle up the mountain, and left his companions gazing after him with envy and admiration: but his progress was unequal, and interrupted by a thousand caprices. When Pleasure warbled in the valley, he mingled in her train. When Pride beckoned towards the precipice, he ventured to the tottering edge. He delighted in devious and untried paths; and made so many excursions from the road, that his feebler companions often outstripped him. I observed that the Muses beheld him with partiality; but Truth often frowned and turned aside her face. While Genius was thus wasting his strength in eccentric flights, I saw a person of a very different appearance, named Application. He crept along with a slow and unremitting pace, his eyes fixed on the top of the mountain, patiently removing every stone that obstructed his way, till he saw most of those below him who had at first derided his slow and toilsome progress. Indeed there were few who ascended the hill with equal and uninterrupted steadiness; for, beside the difficulties of the way, they were continually solicited to turn aside by a numerous crowd of Appetites, Passions, and Pleasures, whose importunity, when they had once complied with, they became less and less able to resist; and, though they often returned to the path, the asperities of the road were more severely felt, the hill appeared more steep and rugged, the fruits which were wholesome and refreshing, seemed harsh and ill-tasted, their sight grew dim, and their feet tripped at every little obstruction.

I saw, with some surprise, that the Muses, whose business was to cheer and encourage those who were toiling up the ascent, would often sing in the bowers of

Pleasure, and accompany those who were enticed away at the call of the Passions. They accompanied them, however, but a little way, and always forsook them when they lost sight of the hill. Their tyrants then doubled their chains upon the unhappy captives, and led them away without resistance to the cells of Ignorance, or the mansions of Misery. Amongst the innumerable seducers who were endeavouring to draw away the votaries of Truth from the path of Science, there was one so little formidable in her appearance, and so gentle and languid in her attempts, that I should scarcely have taken notice of her, but for the numbers she had imperceptibly loaded with her chains. Indolence (for so she was called,) far from proceeding to open hostilities, did not attempt to turn their feet out of the path, but contented herself with retarding their progress; and the purpose she could not force them to abandon, she persuaded them to delay. Her touch had a power like that of the torpedo, which withered the strength of those who came within its influence. Her unhappy captives still turned their faces towards the temple, and always hoped to arrive there; but the ground seemed to slide from beneath their feet, and they found themselves at the bottom before they suspected that they had changed their place. The placid serenity which at first appeared in their countenance, changed by degrees into a melancholy languor, which was tinged with deeper and deeper gloom as they glided down the stream of Insignificance; a dark and sluggish water, which is curled by no breeze, and enlivened by no murmur, till it falls into a dead sea, where the startled passengers are awakened by the shock, and the next moment buried in the gulf of Oblivion.

Of all the unhappy deserters from the paths of Science, none seemed less able to return than the followers of Indolence. The captives of Appetite and Passion could often seize the moment when their tyrants were languid or asleep, to escape from their enchantment; but the dominion of Indolence was constant and unremitted, and seldom resisted till resistance was in vain.

After contemplating these things, I turned my eyes towards the top of the mountain, where the air was always pure and exhilarating, the path shaded with laurels and other evergreens, and the effulgence which beamed from the face of the goddess seemed to shed a glory round her votaries. "Happy," said I, "are they who are permitted to ascend the mountain!"—but while I was pronouncing this exclamation with uncommon ardour, I saw standing beside me a form of diviner features and a more benign radiance. "Happier," said she, "are those whom Virtue conducts to the mansions of Content!"—"What," said I, "does Virtue then reside in the vale?"—"I am found," said she, "in the vale, and I illuminate the mountain. I cheer the cottager at his toil, and inspire the sage at his meditation. I mingle in the crowd of cities, and bless the hermit in his cell. I have a temple in every heart that owns my influence; and to him that wishes for me I am already present. Science may raise you to eminence, but I alone can guide you to felicity!" While the goddess was thus speaking, I stretched out my arms towards her with a vehemence which broke my slumbers. The chill dews were falling around me, and the shades of evening stretched over the landscape. I hastened homeward, and resigned the night to silence and meditation.

ON ROMANCES.

AN IMITATION.

Of all the multifarious productions which the efforts of superior genius, or the labours of scholastic industry, have crowded upon the world, none are perused with more insatiable avidity, or disseminated with more universal applause, than the narrations of feigned events, descriptions of imaginary scenes, and delineations of ideal characters. The celebrity of other authors is confined within very narrow limits. The geometrician and divine, the antiquary and the critic, however distinguished by uncontested excellence, can only hope to please those whom a conformity of disposition has engaged in similar pursuits; and must be content to be regarded by the rest of the world with the smile of frigid indifference, or the contemptuous sneer of self-sufficient folly. The collector of shells and the anatomist of insects is little inclined to enter into theological disputes: the divine is not apt to regard with veneration the uncouth diagrams and tedious calculations of the astronomer: the man whose life has been consumed in adjusting the disputes of lexicographers, or elucidating the learning of antiquity, cannot easily bend his thoughts to recent transactions, or readily interest himself in the unimportant history of his contemporaries: and the cit, who knows no business but acquiring wealth,

and no pleasure but displaying it, has a heart equally shut up to argument and fancy, to the batteries of syllogism, and the arrows of wit. To the writer of fiction alone every ear is open, and every tongue lavish of applause; curiosity sparkles in every eye, and every bosom is throbbing with concern.

It is, however, easy to account for this enchantment. To follow the chain of perplexed ratiocination, to view with critical skill the airy architecture of systems, to unravel the web of sophistry, or weigh the merits of opposite hypotheses, requires perspicacity, and pre-supposes learning. Works of this kind, therefore, are not so well adapted to the generality of readers as familiar and colloquial composition; for few can reason, but all can feel; and many who cannot enter into an argument, may yet listen to a tale. The writer of romance has even an advantage over those who endeavour to amuse by the play of fancy; who, from the fortuitous collision of dissimilar ideas, produce the scintillations of wit; or by the vivid glow of poetical imagery delight the imagination with colours of ideal radiance. The attraction of the magnet is only exerted upon similar particles; and to taste the beauties of Homer, it is requisite to partake his fire; but every one can relish the author who represents common life, because every one can refer to the originals from whence his ideas were taken. He relates events to which all are liable, and applies to passions which all have felt. The gloom of solitude, the languor of inaction, the corrosions of disappointment, and the toil of thought, induce men to step aside from the rugged road of life, and wander in the fairy land of fiction; where every bank is sprinkled with flowers, and every gale loaded with perfume; where every

event introduces a hero, and every cottage is inhabited by a Grace. Invited by these flattering scenes, the student quits the investigation of truth, in which he perhaps meets with no less fallacy, to exhilarate his mind with new ideas, more agreeable, and more easily attained: the busy relax their attention by desultory reading, and smooth the agitation of a ruffled mind with images of peace, tranquillity, and pleasure: the idle and the gay relieve the listlessness of leisure, and diversify the round of life, by a rapid series of events pregnant with rapture and astonishment; and the pensive solitary fills up the vacuities of his heart by interesting himself in the fortunes of imaginary beings, and forming connexions with ideal excellence.

It is, indeed, no ways extraordinary that the mind should be charmed by fancy, and attracted by pleasure; but that we should listen with complacence to the groans of misery, and delight to view the exacerbations of complicated anguish, that we should choose to chill the bosom with imaginary fears, and dim the eyes with fictitious sorrow, seems a kind of paradox of the heart, and can only be credited because it is universally felt. Various are the hypotheses which have been formed to account for the disposition of the mind to riot in this species of intellectual luxury. Some have imagined that we are induced to acquiesce with greater patience in our own lot by beholding pictures of life tinged with deeper horrors, and loaded with more excruciating calamities; as, to a person suddenly emerging out of a dark room, the faintest glimmering of twilight assumes a lustre from the contrasted gloom. Others, with yet deeper refinement, suppose that we take upon ourselves this burden of adscititious sorrows, in order to feast upon the consciousness of our own

virtue. We commiserate others, say they, that we may applaud ourselves; and the sigh of compassionate sympathy is always followed by the gratulations of self-complacent esteem. But surely they who would thus reduce the sympathetic emotions of pity to a system of refined selfishness, have but ill attended to the genuine feelings of humanity. It would, however, exceed the limits of this paper, should I attempt an accurate investigation of these sentiments. But let it be remembered, that we are more attracted by those scenes which interest our passions, or gratify our curiosity, than those which delight our fancy: and, so far from being indifferent to the miseries of others, we are, at the time, totally regardless of our own. And let not those on whom the hand of Time has impressed the characters of oracular wisdom, censure with too much acrimony productions which are thus calculated to please the imagination, and interest the heart. They teach us to think, by inuring us to feel; they ventilate the mind by sudden gusts of passion; and prevent the stagnation of thought, by a fresh infusion of dissimilar ideas.

AGAINST INCONSISTENCY IN OUR EXPECTATIONS.

"WHAT is more reasonable, tha. that they who take pains for any "thing, should get most in that particular for which they take "pains? They have taken pains for power, you for right princi- "ples; they for riches, you for a proper use of the appearances "of things: see whether they have the advantage of you in "that for which you have taken pains, and which they neglect: "If they are in power, and you not, why will not you speak the "truth to yourself, that you do nothing for the sake of power, "but that they do every thing? No, but since I take care to "have right principles, it is more reasonable that I should have "power. Yes, in respect to what you take care about, your "principles. But give up to others the things in which they "have taken more care than you. Else it is just as if, because "you have right principles, you should think it fit that when "you shoot an arrow, you should hit the mark better than an "archer, or that you should forge better than a smith."

CARTER'S EPICTETUS.

As most of the unhappiness in the world arises rather from disappointed desires, than from positive evil, it is of the utmost consequence to attain just notions of the laws and order of the universe, that we may not vex ourselves with fruitless wishes, or give way to groundless and unreasonable discontent. The laws of natural philosophy, indeed, are tolerably understood and attended to; and though we may suffer inconveniences, we are seldom disappointed in consequence of them. No man expects to

preserve orange-trees in the open air through an English winter; or when he has planted an acorn, to see it become a large oak in a few months. The mind of man naturally yields to necessity; and our wishes soon subside when we see the impossibility of their being gratified. Now, upon an accurate inspection, we shall find, in the moral government of the world, and the order of the intellectual system, laws as determinate fixed and invariable as any in Newton's Principia. The progress of vegetation is not more certain than the growth of habit; nor is the power of attraction more clearly proved than the force of affection or the influence of example. The man therefore who has well studied the operations of nature in mind as well as matter, will acquire a certain moderation and equity in his claims upon Providence. He never will be disappointed either in himself or others. He will act with precision; and expect that effect and that alone, from his efforts, which they are naturally adapted to produce. For want of this, men of merit and integrity often censure the dispositions of Providence for suffering characters they despise to run away with advantages which, they yet know, are purchased by such means as a high and noble spirit could never submit to. If you refuse to pay the price, why expect the purchase? We should consider this world as a great mart of commerce, where fortune exposes to our view various commodities, riches, ease, tranquillity, fame, integrity, knowledge. Every thing is marked at a settled price. Our time, our labour, our ingenuity, is so much ready money which we are to lay out to the best advantage. Examine, compare, choose, reject; but stand to your own judgment; and do not, like children, when you have purchased one thing, repine that

you do not possess another which you did not purchase. Such is the force of well-regulated industry, that a steady and vigorous exertion of our faculties, directed to one end, will generally insure success. Would you, for instance, be rich: Do you think that single point worth the sacrificing every thing else to? You may then be rich. Thousands have become so from the lowest beginnings by toil, and patient diligence, and attention to the minutest articles of expense and profit. But you must give up the pleasures of leisure, of a vacant mind, of a free unsuspicious temper. If you preserve your integrity, it must be a course-spun and vulgar honesty. Those high and lofty notions of morals which you brought with you from the schools, must be considerably lowered, and mixed with the baser alloy of a jealous and worldly-minded prudence. You must learn to do hard, if not unjust things; and for the nice embarrassments of a delicate and ingenuous spirit, it is necessary for you to get rid of them as fast as possible. You must shut your heart against the Muses, and be content to feed your understanding with plain, household truths. In short, you must not attempt to enlarge your ideas, or polish your taste, or refine your sentiments; but must keep on in one beaten track, without turning aside either to the right hand or to the left. "But I cannot submit to drudgery like this—I feel a spirit above it." 'Tis well: be above it then; only do not repine that you are not rich.

Is knowledge the pearl of price? That too may be purchased—by steady application, and long solitary hours of study and reflection. Bestow these, and you shall be wise. "But (says the man of letters) what a hardship is it that many an illiterate fellow who cannot construe the

motto of the arms on his coach, shall raise a fortune and make a figure, while I have little more than the common conveniences of life." *Et tibi magna satis!*—Was it in order to raise a fortune that you consumed the sprightly hours of youth in study and retirement? Was it to be rich that you grew pale over the midnight lamp, and distilled the sweetness from the Greek and Roman spring? You have then mistaken your path, and ill employed your industry. "What reward have I then for all my labours?" What reward! A large comprehensive soul, well purged from vulgar fears, and perturbations, and prejudices; able to comprehend and interpret the works of man—of God. A rich, flourishing, cultivated mind, pregnant with inexhaustible stores of entertainment and reflection. A perpetual spring of fresh ideas; and the conscious dignity of superior intelligence. Good heaven! and what reward can you ask besides?

"But is it not some reproach upon the economy of Providence that such a one, who is a mean dirty fellow, should have amassed wealth enough to buy half a nation?" Not in the least. He made himself a mean dirty fellow for that very end. He has paid his health, his conscience, his liberty for it; and will you envy him his bargain? Will you hang your head and blush in his presence because he outshines you in equipage and show? Lift up your brow with a noble confidence, and say to yourself, I have not these things, it is true; but it is because I have not sought, because I have not desired them; it is because I possess something better. I have chosen my lot. I am content and satisfied.

You are a modest man—You love quiet and independence, and have a delicacy and reserve in your temper

which renders it impossible for you to elbow your way in the world, and be the herald of your own merits. Be content then with a modest retirement, with the esteem of your intimate friends, with the praises of a blameless heart, and a delicate ingenuous spirit; but resign the splendid distinctions of the world to those who can better scramble for them.

The man whose tender sensibility of conscience and strict regard to the rules of morality makes him scrupulous and fearful of offending, is often heard to complain of the disadvantages he lies under in every path of honour and profit. "Could I but get over some nice points, and conform to the practice and opinion of those about me, I might stand as fair a chance as others for dignities and preferment." And why can you not? What hinders you from discarding this troublesome scrupulosity of yours which stands so grievously in your way? If it be a small thing to enjoy a healthful mind, sound at the very core, that does not shrink from the keenest inspection; inward freedom from remorse and perturbation; unsullied whiteness and simplicity of manners; a genuine integrity

"Pure in the last recesses of the mind;"

if you think these advantages an inadequate recompense for what you resign, dismiss your scruples this instant, and be a slave-merchant, a parasite, or—what you please.

"If these be motives weak, break off betimes;"

and as you have not spirit to assert the dignity of virtue, be wise enough not to forego the emoluments of vice.

I much admire the spirit of the ancient philosophers, in that they never attempted, as our moralists often do, to

lower the tone of philosophy, and make it consistent with all the indulgences of indolence and sensuality. They never thought of having the bulk of mankind for their disciples; but kept themselves as distinct as possible from a worldly life. They plainly told men what sacrifices were required, and what advantages they were which might be expected.

> "Si virtus hoc una potest dare, fortis omissis
> Hoc age deliciis....."

If you would be a philosopher these are the terms. You must do thus and thus: there is no other way. If not, go and be one of the vulgar.

There is no one quality gives so much dignity to a character as consistency of conduct. Even if a man's pursuits be wrong and unjustifiable, yet if they are prosecuted with steadiness and vigour, we cannot withhold our admiration. The most characteristic mark of a great mind is to choose some one important object, and pursue it through life. It was this made Cæsar a great man. His object was ambition; he pursued it steadily, and was always ready to sacrifice to it every interfering passion or inclination.

There is a pretty passage in one of Lucian's dialogues, where Jupiter complains to Cupid that though he has had so many intrigues, he was never sincerely beloved. In order to be loved, says Cupid, you must lay aside your ægis and your thunder-bolts, and you must curl and perfume your hair, and place a garland on your head, and walk with a soft step, and assume a winning obsequious deportment. But, replied Jupiter, I am not willing to resign so much of my dignity. Then, returns Cupid, leave

off desiring to be loved—He wanted to be Jupiter and Adonis at the same time.

It must be confessed, that men of genius are of all others most inclined to make these unreasonable claims. As their relish for enjoyment is strong, their views large and comprehensive, and they feel themselves lifted above the common bulk of mankind, they are apt to slight that natural reward of praise and admiration which is ever largely paid to distinguished abilities ; and to expect to be called forth to public notice and favour : without considering that their talents are commonly very unfit for active life ; that their eccentricity and turn for speculation disqualifies them for the business of the world, which is best carried on by men of moderate genius ; and that society is not obliged to reward any one who is not useful to it. The poets have been a very unreasonable race, and have often complained loudly of the neglect of genius and the ingratitude of the age. The tender and pensive Cowley, and the elegant Shenstone, had their minds tinctured by this discontent ; and even the sublime melancholy of Young was too much owing to the stings of disappointed ambition.

The moderation we have been endeavouring to inculcate will likewise prevent much mortification and disgust in our commerce with mankind. As we ought not to wish in ourselves, so neither should we expect in our friends contrary qualifications. Young and sanguine, when we enter the world, and feel our affections drawn forth by any particular excellence in a character, we immediately give it credit for all others ; and are beyond measure disgusted when we come to discover, as we soon must discover, the defects in the other side of the balance.

But nature is much more frugal than to heap together all manner of shining qualities in one glaring mass. Like a judicious painter she endeavours to preserve a certain unity of style and colouring in her pieces. Models of absolute perfection are only to be met with in romance; where exquisite beauty, and brilliant wit, and profound judgment, and immaculate virtue, are all blended together to adorn some favourite character. As an anatomist knows that the racer cannot have the strength and muscles of the draught-horse; and that winged men, griffins, and mermaids must be mere creatures of the imagination; so the philosopher is sensible that there are combinations of moral qualities which never can take place but in idea. There is a different air and complexion in characters as well as in faces, though perhaps each equally beautiful; and the excellencies of one cannot be transferred to the other. Thus if one man possesses a stoical apathy of soul, acts independent of the opinion of the world, and fulfils every duty with mathematical exactness, you must not expect that man to be greatly influenced by the weakness of pity, or the partialities of friendship: you must not be offended that he does not fly to meet you after a short absence; or require from him the convivial spirit and honest effusions of a warm, open, susceptible heart. If another is remarkable for a lively active zeal, inflexible integrity, a strong indignation against vice, and freedom in reproving it, he will probably have some little bluntness in his address not altogether suitable to polished life; he will want the winning arts of conversation; he will disgust by a kind of haughtiness and negligence in his manner, and often hurt the delicacy of his acquaintance with harsh and disagreeable truths.

We usually say—that man is a genius, *but* he has some whims and oddities—such a one has a very general knowledge, *but* he is superficial; &c. Now in all such cases we should speak more rationally did we substitute *therefore* for *but*. He is a genius, *therefore* he is whimsical; and the like.

. It is the fault of the present age, owing to the freer commerce that different ranks and professions now enjoy with each other, that characters are not marked with sufficient strength: the several classes run too much into one another. We have fewer pedants, it is true, but we have fewer striking originals. Every one is expected to have such a tincture of general knowledge as is incompatible with going deep into any science; and such a conformity to fashionable manners as checks the free workings of the ruling passion, and gives an insipid sameness to the face of society, under the idea of polish and regularity.

There is a cast of manners peculiar and becoming to each age, sex, and profession; one, therefore, should not throw out illiberal and commonplace censures against another. Each is perfect in its kind. A woman as a woman: a tradesman as a tradesman. We are often hurt by the brutality and sluggish conceptions of the vulgar; not considering that some there must be to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, and that cultivated genius, or even any great refinement and delicacy in their moral feelings, would be a real misfortune to them.

Let us then study the philosophy of the human mind. The man who is master of this science, will know what to expect from every one. From this man, wise advice; from that, cordial sympathy; from another, casual entertainment. The passions and inclinations of others are his

tools, which he can use with as much precision as he would the mechanical powers; and he can as readily make allowance for the workings of vanity, or the bias of self-interest in his friends, as for the power of friction, or the irregularities of the needle.

ON MONASTIC INSTITUTIONS.

I HAPPENED the other day to take a solitary walk amongst the venerable ruins of an old abbey. The stillness and solemnity of the place were favourable to thought, and naturally led me to a train of ideas relative to the scene; when, like a good protestant, I began to indulge a secret triumph in the ruin of so many structures which I had always considered as the haunts of ignorance and superstition.

Ye are fallen, said I, ye dark and gloomy mansions of mistaken zeal, where the proud priest and lazy monk fattened upon the riches of the land, and crept like vermin from their cells to spread their poisonous doctrines through the nation, and disturb the peace of kings. Obscure in their origin, but daring and ambitious in their guilt! See how the pure light of heaven is clouded by the dim glass of the arched window, stained with the gaudy cŏlours of monkish tales and legendary fiction; fit emblem how reluctantly they admitted the fairer light of truth amidst these dark recesses, and how much they have debased its genuine lustre! The low cells, the long and narrow aisles, the gloomy arches, the damp and secret caverns which wind beneath the hollow ground, far from impressing on the mind the idea of the God of truth and love, seem only fit for those dark places of the earth in which are the habitations of cruelty. These massy stones and scattered reliques of the vast edifice, like the large bones and

gigantic armour of a once formidable ruffian, produce emotions of mingled dread and exultation. Farewell, ye once venerated seats! enough of you remains, and may it always remain, to remind us from what we have escaped, and make posterity for ever thankful for this fairer age of liberty and light.

Such were for a while my meditations; but it is cruel to insult a fallen enemy, and I gradually fell into a different train of thought. I began to consider whether something might not be advanced in favour of these institutions during the barbarous ages in which they flourished; and though they have been productive of much mischief and superstition, whether they might not have spread the glimmering of a feeble ray of knowledge through that thick night which once involved the western hemisphere.

And where, indeed, could the precious remains of classical learning, and the divine monuments of ancient taste, have been safely lodged amidst the ravages of that of ferocity and rapine which succeeded the desolation of the Roman empire, except in sanctuaries like these, consecrated by the superstition of the times beyond their intrinsic merit? The frequency of wars, and the licentious cruelty with which they were conducted, left neither the hamlet of the peasant nor the castle of the baron free from depredation; but the church and monastery generally remained inviolate. There Homer and Aristotle were obliged to shroud their heads from the rage of Gothic ignorance; and there the sacred records of divine truth were preserved, like treasure hid in the earth in troublesome times, safe, but unenjoyed. Some of the barbarous nations were converted before their conquests, and most of them soon after their settlement in the countries they

over-ran. Those buildings which their new faith taught them to venerate, afforded a shelter for those valuable manuscripts, which must otherwise have been destroyed in the common wreck. At the revival of learning, they were produced from their dormitories. A copy of the pandects of Justinian, that valuable remain of Roman law, which first gave to Europe the idea of a more perfect jurisprudence, and gave men a relish for a new and important study, was discovered in a monastery of Amalphi. Most of the classics were recovered by the same means; and to this it is owing, to the books and learning preserved in these repositories, that we were not obliged to begin anew, and trace every art by slow and uncertain steps from its first origin. Science, already full-grown and vigorous, awaked as from a trance, shook her pinions, and soon soared to the heights of knowledge.

Nor was she entirely idle during her recess; at least we cannot but confess that what little learning remained in the world was amongst the priests and religious orders. Books, before the invention of paper, and the art of printing, were so dear, that few private persons possessed any. The only libraries were in convents; and the monks were often employed in transcribing manuscripts, which was a very tedious, and at that time a very necessary task. It was frequently enjoined as a penance for some slight offence, or given as an exercise to the younger part of the community. The monks were obliged by their rules to spend some stated hours every day in reading and study; nor was any one to be chosen abbot without a competent share of learning. They were the only historians; and though their accounts be interwoven with many a legendary tale, and darkened by much superstition, still they are

better than no histories at all; and we cannot but think ourselves obliged to them for transmitting to us, in any dress, the annals of their country.

They were likewise almost the sole instructors of youth. Towards the end of the tenth century, there were no schools in Europe but the monasteries, and those which belonged to episcopal residences; nor any masters but the Benedictines. It is true, their course of education extended no further than what they called the seven liberal arts, and these were taught in a very dry and uninteresting manner. But this was the genius of the age, and it should not be imputed to them as a reproach that they did not teach well, when no one taught better. We are guilty of great unfairness when we compare the school-men with the philosophers of a more enlightened age: we should contrast them with those of their own times; with a high-constable of France who could not read; with kings who made the sign of the cross in confirmation of their charters, because they could not write their names; with a whole people without the least glimmering of taste or literature. Whatever was their real knowledge, there was a much greater difference between men of learning, and the bulk of the nation at that time, than there is at present; and certainly, some of the disciples of those schools who, though now fallen into disrepute, were revered in their day by the names of the subtle, or the angelic doctors, showed an acuteness and strength of genius, which, if properly directed, would have gone far in philosophy; and they only failed because their inquiries were not the objects of the human powers. Had they exercised half that acuteness on facts and experiments, they had been truly great men. However,

there were not wanting some, even in the darkest ages, whose names will be always remembered with pleasure by the lovers of science. Alcuin, the preceptor of Charlemagne, the first who introduced a taste for polite literature into France, and the chief instrument that prince made use of in his noble endeavours for the encouragement of learning; to whom the universities of Soissons, Tours and Paris owe their origin: the historians, Matthew Paris and William of Malmsbury; the elegant and unfortunate Abelard; and, to crown the rest, the English Franciscan, Roger Bacon.

It may be here observed, that forbidding the vulgar tongue in the offices of devotion, and in reading the Scriptures, though undoubtedly a great corruption in the Christian church, was of infinite service to the interests of learning. When the ecclesiastics had locked up their religion in a foreign tongue, they would take care not to lose the key. This gave an importance to the learned languages; and every scholar could not only read, but wrote and disputed in Latin, which without such a motive would probably have been no more studied than the Chinese. And at a time when the modern languages of Europe were yet unformed and barbarous, Latin was of great use as a kind of universal tongue, by which learned men might converse and correspond with each other.

Indeed the monks were almost the only set of men who had leisure or opportunity to pay the least attention to literary subjects. A learned education (and a very little went to that title) was reckoned peculiar to the religious. It was almost esteemed a blemish on the savage and martial character of the gentry, to have any tincture of letters. A man, therefore, of a studious and

retired turn, averse to quarrels, and not desirous of the fierce and sanguinary glory of those times, beheld in the cloister a peaceful and honourable sanctuary; where, without the reproach of cowardice, or danger of invasion, he might devote himself to learning, associate with men of his own turn, and have free access to libraries and manuscripts. In this enlightened and polished age, where learning is diffused through every rank, and many a merchant's clerk possesses more real knowledge than half of the literati of that æra, we can scarcely conceive how gross an ignorance overspread those times, and how totally all useful learning might have been lost amongst us, had it not been for an order of men, vested with peculiar privileges, and protected by even a superstitious degree of reverence.

Thus the Muses, with their attendant arts, in strange disguise indeed, and uncouth trappings, took refuge in the peaceful gloom of the convent. Statuary carved a madonna or a crucifix; Painting illuminated a missal; Eloquence made the panegyric of a saint; and History composed a legend. Yet still they breathed, and were ready, at any happier period, to emerge from obscurity with all their native charms and undiminished lustre.

But there were other views in which those who devoted themselves to a monastic life might be supposed useful to society. They were often employed either in cultivating their gardens, or in curious mechanical works; as indeed the nuns are still famous for many elegant and ingenious manufactures. By the constant communication they had with those of their own order, and with their common head at Rome, they maintained some intercourse between nations at a time when travelling was

dangerous, and commerce had not, as now, made the most distant parts of the globe familiar to each other: and they kept up a more intimate bond of union amongst learned men of all countries, who would otherwise have been secluded from all knowledge of each other. A monk might travel with more convenience than any one else; his person was safer, and he was sure of meeting with proper accommodations. The intercourse with Rome must have been peculiarly favourable to these northern nations; as Italy for a long time led the way in every improvement of politeness or literature: and if we imported their superstition, we likewise imported their manufactures, their knowledge, and their taste. Thus Alfred sent for Italian monks, when he wanted to civilize his people, and introduce amongst them some tincture of letters. It may likewise be presumed that they tempered the rigour of monarchy. Indeed they, as well as the sovereigns, endeavoured to enslave the people; but subjection was not likely to be so abject and unlimited where the object of it was divided, and each showed by turns that the other might be opposed. It must have been of service to the cause of liberty to have a set of men, whose laws, privileges, and immunities the most daring kings were afraid to trample on; and this, before a more enlightened spirit of freedom had arisen, might have its effect in preventing the states of Christendom from falling into such entire slavery as the Asiatics.

Such an order would in some degree check the excessive regard paid to birth. A man of mean origin and obscure parentage saw himself excluded from almost every path of secular preferment, and almost treated as a being of an inferior species by the high and haughty

spirit of the gentry; but he was at liberty to aspire to the highest dignities of the church; and there have been many who, like Sextus V., have by their industry and personal merit alone raised themselves to a level with kings.

It should likewise be remembered that many of the orders were charitable institutions; as the *knights of faith and charity* in the thirteenth century, who were associated for the purpose of suppressing those bands of robbers which infested the public roads in France; the *brethren of the order of the redemption*, for redeeming slaves from the Mahometans; the *order of St. Anthony*, first established for the relief of the poor under certain disorders; and the *brethren and sisters of the pious and Christian schools*, for educating poor children. These supplied the place of hospitals and other such foundations, which are now established on the broader basis of public benevolence. To bind up the wounds of the stranger, was peculiarly the office of the inhabitants of the convent; and they often shared the charities they received. The exercise of hospitality is still their characteristic, and must have been of particular use formerly, when there were not the conveniences and accommodations for travelling which we now enjoy. The learned stranger was always sure of an agreeable residence amongst them; and as they all understood Latin, they served him for interpreters, and introduced him to a sight of whatever was curious or valuable in the countries which he visited. They checked the spirit of savage fierceness, to which our warlike ancestors were so prone, with the mildness and sanctity of religious influences; they preserved some respect to law and

order, and often decided controversies by means less bloody than the sword, though confessedly more superstitious.

A proof that these institutions had a favourable aspect towards civilization may be drawn from a late history of Ireland. "Soon after the introduction of Christianity into that kingdom," says Dr. Leland, "the monks fixed their habitations in deserts, which they cultivated with their own hands, and rendered the most delightful spots in the kingdom. These deserts became well policed cities; and it is remarkable enough, that to the monks we owe so useful an institution in Ireland as the bringing great numbers together into one civil community. In these cities the monks set up schools, and taught, not only the youth of Ireland, but the neighbouring nations; furnishing them also with books. They became umpires between contending chiefs, and when they could not confine them within the bounds of reason and religion, at least terrified them by denouncing divine vengeance against their excesses."

Let it be considered too, that when the minds of men began to open, some of the most eminent reformers sprung from the bosom of the church, and even of the convent. It was not the laity who began to think. The ecclesiastics were the first to perceive the errors they had introduced. The church was reformed from within, not from without; and like the silk-worm, when ripened in their cells to maturer vigour and perfection, they pierced the cloud themselves had spun, and within which they had so long been enveloped.

And let not the good protestant be too much startled if I here venture to insinuate, that the monasteries were

schools of some high and respectable virtues. Poverty, chastity, and a renunciation of the world, were certainly intended in the first plan of these institutions; and though, from the unavoidable frailty of human nature, they were not always observed, certain it is, that many individuals amongst them have been striking examples of the self-denying virtues: and as the influence they acquired was only built upon the voluntary homage of the mind, it may be presumed such an ascendancy was not originally gained without some species of merit. The fondness for monkery is easily deduced from some of the best principles in the human heart. It was indeed necessity, that in the third century first drove the Christians to shelter themselves from the Decian persecution in the solitary deserts of Thebais; but the humour soon spread, and numbers under the name of hermits, or eremites, secluded themselves from the commerce of mankind, choosing the wildest solitudes, living in caves and hollows of the rocks, and subsisting on such roots and herbs as the ground afforded them. About the fourth century they were gathered into communities, and increased with surprising rapidity. It was then that, by a great and sudden revolution, the fury of persecution had ceased, and the governing powers were become friendly to Christianity. But the agitation of men's minds did not immediately subside with the storm. The Christians had so long experienced the necessity of resigning all the enjoyments of life, and were so detached from every tie which might interfere with the profession of their faith, that upon a more favourable turn of affairs they hardly dared open their minds to pleasurable emotions. They thought the life of a good

man must be a continual warfare between mind and body; and having been long used to see ease and safety on the one side, and virtue on the other, no wonder if the association was so strong in their minds, as to suggest the necessity of voluntary mortification, and lead them to inflict those sufferings upon themselves, which they no longer apprehended from others. They had continually experienced the amazing effects of Christianity in supporting its followers under hardship, tortures, and death: and they thought little of its influence in regulating the common behaviour of life, if it produced none of those great exertions they had been used to contemplate. They were struck with the change from heathen licentiousness to the purity of the gospel; and thought they could never be far enough removed from that bondage of the senses which it had just cost them so violent a struggle to escape. The minds of men were working with newly-received opinions, not yet mellowed into a rational faith; and the young converts, astonished at the grandeur and sublimity of the doctrines which then first entered their hearts with irresistible force, thought them worthy to engross their whole attention. The mystic dreams of the Platonist mingled with the enthusiasm of the martyr; and it soon became the prevailing opinion, that silence, solitude, and contemplation, were necessary for the reception of divine truth. Mistaken ideas prevailed of a purity and perfection far superior to the rules of common life, which was only to be attained by those who denied themselves all the indulgences of sense; and thus the ascetic severities of the cloister succeeded in some degree to the philosophic poverty of the Cynic school, and the lofty virtues of the Stoic.

Indeed, it is now the prevailing taste in morals to decry every observance which has the least appearance of rigour; and to insist only on the softer virtues. But let it be remembered, that self-command and self-denial are as necessary to the practice of benevolence, charity, and compassion, as to any other duty; that it is impossible to live to others without denying ourselves; and that the man who has not learned to curb his appetites and passions is ill qualified for those sacrifices which the friendly affections are continually requiring of him. The man who has that one quality of self-command will find little difficulty in the practice of any other duty; as, on the contrary, he who has it not, though possessed of the gentlest feelings, and most refined sensibilities, will soon find his benevolence sink into a mere companionable easiness of temper, neither useful to others nor happy for himself. A noble enthusiasm is sometimes of use to show how far human nature can go. Though it may not be proper, or desirable, that numbers should seclude themselves from the common duties and ordinary avocations of life, for the austerer lessons of the cloister, yet it is not unuseful that some should push their virtues to even a romantic height; and it is encouraging to reflect in the hour of temptation, that the love of ease, the aversion to pain, every appetite and passion, and even the strongest propensities in our nature, have been controlled; that the empire of the mind over the body has been asserted in its fullest extent; and that there have been men in all ages capable of voluntarily renouncing all the world offers, voluntarily suffering all it dreads, and living independent, and unconnected with it. Nor was it a small advantage, or ill calculated to support the dignity of science, that a man of learning

might be respectable in a coarse gown, a leathern girdle, and barefooted. Cardinal Ximenes preserved the severe simplicity of a convent amidst the pomp and luxury of palaces; and to those who thus thought it becoming in the highest stations to affect the appearance of poverty, the reality surely could not be very dreadful.

There is yet another light in which these institutions may be considered. It is surely not improper to provide a retreat for those who, stained by some deep and enormous crime, wish to expiate by severe and uncommon penitence those offences which render them unworthy of freer commerce with the world. Repentance is never so secure from a relapse as when it breaks off at once from every former connexion, and entering upon a new course of life, bids adieu to every object that might revive the idea of temptations which have once prevailed. In these solemn retreats, the stillness and acknowledged sanctity of the place, with the striking novelty of every thing around them, might have great influence in calming the passions; might break the force of habit, and suddenly induce a new turn of thinking. There are likewise afflictions so overwhelming to humanity, that they leave no relish in the mind for any thing else than to enjoy its own melancholy in silence and solitude; and to a heart torn with remorse, or oppressed with sorrow, the gloomy severities of La Trappe are really a relief. Retirement is also the favourite wish of age. Many a statesman, and many a warrior, sick of the bustle of that world to which they had devoted the prime of their days, have longed for some quiet cell, where, like Cardinal Woolsey, or Charles the Fifth, they might shroud their gray heirs, and lose sight of the follies with which they had been too much tainted.

Though there is, perhaps, less to plead for immuring beauty in a closter, and confining that part of the species who are formed to shine in families and sweeten society, to the barren duties and austere discipline of a monastic life, yet circumstances might occur, in which they would, even to a woman, be a welcome refuge. A young female, whom accident or war had deprived of her natural protectors, must, in an age of barbarism, be peculiarly exposed and helpless. A convent offered her an asylum where she might be safe at least, if not happy; and add to the consciousness of unviolated virtue the flattering dreams of angelic purity and perfection. There were orders, as well amongst the women as the men, instituted for charitable purposes, such as that of the *virgins of love*, or *daughters of mercy*, founded in 1660, for the relief of the sick poor; with others for instructing their children. These must have been peculiarly suited to the softness and compassion of the sex; and to this it is no doubt owing, that still, in catholic countries, ladies of the highest rank often visit the hospitals and houses of the poor; waiting on them with the most tender assiduity, and performing such offices as our protestant ladies would be shocked at the thoughts of. We should also consider, that most of the females who now take the veil are such as have no agreeable prospects in life. Why should not these be allowed to quit a world which will never miss them? It is easier to retire from the public than to support its disregard. The convent is to them a shelter from poverty and neglect. Their little community grows dear to them. The equality which subsists among these sisters of obscurity, the similarity of their fate, the peace, the leisure they enjoy, give rise to the most endearing

friendships. Their innocence is shielded by the simplicity of their life from even the idea of ill; and they are flattered by the notion of a voluntary renunciation of pleasures, which, probably, had they continued in the world, they would have had little share in.

After all that can be said, we have reason enough to rejoice that the superstitions of former times are now fallen into disrepute. What might be a palliative at one time, soon became a crying evil in itself. When the fuller day of science began to dawn, the monkish orders were willing to exclude its brightness, that the dim lamp might still glimmer in their cell. Their growing vices have rendered them justly odious to society, and they seem in a fair way of being for ever abolished. But may we not still hope that the world was better than it would have been without them; and that He, who knows to bring good out of evil, has made them, in their day, subservient to some useful purposes. The corruptions of Christianity, which have been accumulating for so many ages, seem to be now gradually clearing away, and some future period may perhaps exhibit our religion in all its native simplicity.

So the pure limpid stream, when foul with stains
Of rushing torrents and descending rains,
Works itself clear, and as it runs refines,
Till by degrees the floating mirror shines;
Reflects each flower that on its borders grows,
And a new heaven in its fair bosom shows.

AN INQUIRY INTO THOSE KINDS OF DISTRESS WHICH EXCITE AGREEABLE SENSATIONS:

WITH A TALE.

It is undoubtedly true, though a phenomenon of the human mind difficult to accout for, that the representation of distress frequently gives pleasure; from which general observation many of our modern writers of tragedy and romance seem to have drawn this inference,—that in order to please, they have nothing more to do than to paint distress in natural and striking colours. With this view, they heap together all the afflicting events and dismal accidents their imagination can furnish; and when they have half broke the reader's heart, they expect he should thank them for his agreeable entertainment. An author of this class sits down, pretty much like an inquisitor, to compute how much suffering he can inflict upon the hero of his tale before he makes an end of him; with this difference, indeed, that the inquisitor only tortures those who are at least reputed criminals; whereas the writer generally chooses the most excellent character in his piece for the subject of his persecution. The great criterion of excellence is placed in being able to draw tears plentifully; and coucluding we shall weep the more, the more the picture is loaded with doleful events, they go on, telling

..... of sorrows upon sorrows
Even to a lamentable length of woe.

A monarch once proposed a reward for the discovery of a new pleasure; but if any one could find out a new torture, or nondescript calamity, he would be more entitled to the applause of those who fabricate books of entertainment.

But the springs of pity require to be touched with a more delicate hand; and it is far from being true that we are agreeably affected by every thing that excites our sympathy. It shall therefore be the business of this essay to distinguish those kinds of distress which are pleasing in the representation from those which are really painful and disgusting.

The view or relation of mere misery can never be pleasing. We have, indeed, a strong sympathy with all kinds of misery; but it is a feeling of pure unmixed pain, similar in kind, though not equal in degree, to what we feel for ourselves on the like occasions; and never produces that melting sorrow, that thrill of tenderness, to which we give the name of pity. They are two distinct sensations, marked by very different external expression. One causes the nerves to tingle, the flesh to shudder, and the whole countenance to be thrown into strong contractions; the other relaxes the frame, opens the features, and produces tears. When we crush a noxious or loathsome animal, we may sympathize strongly with the pain it suffers, but with far different emotions from the tender sentiment we feel for the dog of Ulysses, who crawled to meet his long-lost master, looked up, and died at his feet. Extreme bodily pain is perhaps the most intense suffering we are capable of, and if the fellow feeling with misery

alone was grateful to the mind, the exhibition of a man in a fit of the toothach, or under a chirurgical operation, would have a fine effect in tragedy. But there must be some other sentiment combined with this kind of instinctive sympathy, before it becomes in any degree pleasing, or produces the sweet emotion of pity. This sentiment is love, esteem, the complacency we take in the contemplation of beauty, of mental or moral excellence, called forth and rendered more interesting by circumstances of pain and danger. Tenderness is, much more properly than sorrow, the spring of tears; for it affects us in that manner, whether combined with joy or grief; perhaps more in the former case than the latter. And I believe we may venture to assert, that no distress which produces tears is wholly without a mixture of pleasure. When Joseph's brethren were sent to buy corn, if they had perished in the desert by wild beasts, or been reduced (as in the horrid adventures of a Pierre de Vaud) to eat one another, we might have shuddered, but we should not have wept for them. The gush of tears breaks forth when Joseph made himself known to his brethren, and fell on their neck, and kissed them. When Hubert prepares to burn out Prince Arthur's eyes, the shocking circumstance, of itself, would only affect us with horror; it is the amiable simplicity of the young prince, and his innocent affection to his intended murderer, that draws our tears, and excites that tender sorrow which we love to feel, and which refines the heart while we do feel it.

We see, therefore, from this view of our internal feelings, that no scenes of misery ought to be exhibited which are not connected with the display of some moral

excellence or agreeable quality. If fortitude, power, and strength of mind are called forth, they produce the sublime feelings of wonder and admiration: if the softer qualities of gentleness, grace, and beauty, they inspire love and pity. The management of these latter emotions is our present object.

And let it be remembered, in the first place, that the misfortunes which excite pity must not be too horrid and overwhelming. The mind is rather stunned than softened by great calamities. They are little circumstances that work most sensibly upon the tender feelings. For this reason, a well-written novel generally draws more tears than a tragedy. The distresses of tragedy are more calculated to amaze and terrify, than to move compassion. Battles, torture and death are in every page. The dignity of the characters, the importance of the events, the pomp of verse and imagery interest the grander passions, and raise the mind to an enthusiasm little favourable to the weak and languid notes of pity. The tragedies of Young are in a fine strain of poetry, and the situations are worked up with great energy; but the pictures are in too deep a shade: all his pieces are full of violent and gloomy passions, and so over-wrought with horror, that instead of awakening any pleasing sensibility they leave on the mind an impression of sadness mixed with terror. Shakespear is sometimes guilty of presenting scenes too shocking. Such is the trampling out of Gloster's eyes; and such is the whole play of Titus Andronicus. But Lee, beyond all others, abounds with this kind of images. He delighted in painting the most daring crimes and cruel massacres; and though he has shown himself extremely capable of raising tenderness, he conti-

nually checks its course by shocking and disagreeable expressions. His pieces are in the same taste with the pictures of Spagnolet, and there are many scenes in his tragedies which no one can relish who would not look with pleasure on the flaying of St. Bartholomew. The following speech of Marguerite, in the Massacre of Paris, was, I suppose, intended to express the utmost tenderness of affection.

> Die for him! that's too little; I could burn
> Piece-meal away, or bleed to death by drops,
> Be flayed alive, then broke upon the wheel,
> Yet with a smile endure it all for Guise:
> And when let loose from torments, all one wound,
> Run with my mangled arms and crush him dead.

Images like these will never excite the softer passions. We are less moved at the description of an Indian tortured with all the dreadful ingenuity of that savage people, than with the fatal mistake of the lover in the Spectator, who pierced an artery in the arm of his mistress as he was letting her blood. Tragedy and romance writers are likewise apt to make too free with the more violent expressions of passion and distress, by which means they lose their effect. Thus an ordinary author does not know how to express any strong emotion otherwise than by swoonings or death; so that a person experienced in this kind of reading, when a girl faints away at parting with her lover, or a hero kills himself for the loss of his mistress, considers it as the established etiquette upon such occasions, and turns over the pages with the utmost coolness and unconcern; whereas real sensibility, and a more intimate knowledge of human nature, would have suggested a thousand little touches of grief, which, though slight,

are irresistible. We are too gloomy a people. Some of the French novels are remarkable for little affecting incidents, imagined with delicacy, and told with grace. Perhaps they have a better turn than we have for this kind of writing.

A judicious author will never attempt to raise pity by any thing mean or disgusting. As we have already observed, there must be a degree of complacence mixed with our sorrows to produce an agreeable sympathy; nothing, therefore, must be admitted which destroys the grace and dignity of suffering; the imagination must have an amiable figure to dwell upon: there are circumstances so ludicrous or disgusting, that no character can preserve a proper decorum under them, or appear in an agreeable light. Who can read the following description of Polypheme without finding his compassion entirely destroyed by aversion and loathing?

> . . . . . His bloody hand
> Snatched two unhappy of my martial band,
> And dashed like dogs against the stony floor,
> The pavement swims with brains and mingled gore;
> Torn limb from limb, he spreads his horrid feast,
> And fierce devours it like a mountain beast;
> He sucks the marrow, and the blood he drains,
> Nor entrails, flesh, nor solid bone remains.

Or that of Scylla,

> In the wide dungeon she devours her food,
> And the flesh trembles while she churns the blood.

Deformity is always disgusting, and the imagination cannot reconcile it with the idea of a favourite character; therefore the poet and romance-writer are fully justified in giving a larger share of beauty to their principal figures

than is usually met with in common life. A late genius, indeed, in a whimsical mood, gave us a lady with her nose crushed for the heroine of his story: but the circumstance spoils the picture;, and though in the course of the story it is kept a good deal out of sight, whenever it does recur to the imagination we are hurt and disgusted. It was an heroic instance of virtue in the nuns of a certain abbey, who cut off their noses and lips to avoid violation; yet this would make a very bad subject for a poem or a play. Something akin to this is the representation of any thing unnatural; of which kind is the famous story of the Roman charity, and for this reason I cannot but think it an unpleasing subject for either the pen or the pencil.

Poverty, if truly represented, shocks our nicer feelings; therefore, whenever it is made use of to awaken our compassion, the rags and dirt, the squalid appearance and mean employments incident to that state, must be kept out of sight, and the distress must arise from the idea of depression, and the shock of falling from higher fortunes. We do not pity Belisarius as a poor blind beggar; and a painter would succeed very ill who should sink him to the meanness of that condition. He must let us still discover the conqueror of the Vandals, the general of the imperial armies, or we shall be little interested. Let us look at the picture of the old woman in Otway:

> ..... A wrinkled hag with age grown double,
> Picking dry sticks, and muttering to herself;
> Her eyes with scalding rheum were galled and red;
> Cold palsy shook her head; her hands seemed withered;
> And on her crooked shoulder had she wrapt
> The tattered remnant of an old striped hanging,
> Which served to keep her carcase from the cold;
> So there was nothing of a-piece about her.

Here is the extreme of wretchedness, and instead of melting into pity, we should turn away with disgust, if we were not pleased with it, as we are with a Dutch painting, from its exact imitation of nature. Indeed the author only intended it to strike horror. But how different are the sentiments we feel for the lovely Belvidera! We see none of those circumstances which render poverty an unamiable thing. When the goods are seized by an execution, our attention is turned to *the piles of massy plate, and all the ancient, most domestic ornaments*, which imply grandeur and consequence; or to such instances of their hard fortune as will lead us to pity them as lovers: we are struck and affected with the general face of ruin; but we are not brought near enough to discern the ugliness of its features. Belvidera ruined, Belvidera deprived of friends, without a home, abandoned to the wide world—we can contemplate with all the pleasing sympathy of pity; but had she been represented as really sunk into low life; had we seen her employed in the most servile offices of poverty, our compassion would have given way to contempt and disgust. Indeed, we may observe in real life, that poverty is only pitied so long as people can keep themselves from the effects of it. When in common language we say *a miserable object*, we mean an object of distress which, if we relieve, we turn away from at the same time. To make pity pleasing, the object of it must not in any view be disagreeable to the imagination. How admirably has the author of Clarissa managed this point! Amidst scenes of suffering which rend the heart, in poverty, in a prison, under the most shocking outrages, the grace and delicacy of her character never suffers even for a moment: there seems to be a charm about her which prevents her re-

ceiving a stain from any thing which happens; and Clarissa, abandoned and undone, is the object not only of complacence, but veneration.

I would likewise observe, that if an author would have us feel a strong degree of compassion, his characters must not be too perfect. The stern fortitude and inflexible resolution of a Cato may command esteem, but does not excite tenderness; and faultless rectitude of conduct, though no rigour be mixed with it, is of too sublime a nature to inspire compassion. Virtue has a kind of self-sufficiency; it stands upon its own basis, and cannot be injured by any violence. It must therefore be mixed with something of helplessness and imperfection, with an excessive sensibility, or a simplicity bordering upon weakness, before it raises, in any great degree, either tenderness or familiar love. If there be a fault in the masterly performance just now mentioned, it is that the character of Clarissa is so inflexibly right, her passions are under such perfect command, and her prudence is so equal to every occasion, that see seems not to need that sympathy we should bestow upon one of a less elevated character; and perhaps we should feel a livelier emotion of tenderness for the innocent girl whom Lovelace calls his Rosebud, but that the story of Clarissa is so worked up by the strength of colouring, and the force of repeated impressions, as to command all our sorrow.

Pity seems too degrading a sentiment to be offered at the shrine of faultless excellence. The sufferings martyrs are rather beheld with admiration and sympathetic triumph than with tears; and we never feel much for those whom we consider as themselves raised above common feelings.

The last rule I shall insist upon is, that scenes of distress should not be too long continued. All our finer feelings are in a manner momentary, and no art can carry them beyond a certain point, either in intenseness or duration. Constant suffering deadens the heart to tender impressions; as we may observe in sailors and others who are grown callous by a life of continual hardships. It is therefore highly necessary, in a long work, to relieve the mind by scenes of pleasure and gaiety: and I cannot think it so absurd a practice as our modern delicacy has represented it, to intermix wit and fancy with the pathetic, provided care be taken not to check the passions while they are flowing. The transition from a pleasurable state of mind to tender sorrow is not so difficult as we imagine. When the mind is opened by gay and agreeable scenes, every impression is felt more sensibly. Persons of a lively temper are much more susceptible of that sudden swell of sensibility which occasions tears, than those of a grave and saturnine cast: for this reason women are more easily moved to weeping than men. Those who have touched the springs of pity with the finest hand, have mingled light strokes of pleasantry and mirth in their most pathetic passages. Very different is the conduct of many novel-writers, who, by plunging us into scenes of distress without end or limit, exhaust the powers, and before the conclusion either render us insensible to every thing, or fix a real sadness upon the mind. The uniform style of tragedies is one reason why they affect so little. In our old plays, all the force of language is reserved for the more interesting parts; and in the scenes of common life there is no attempt to rise above common language: whereas we, by that pompous manner and affected solemnity which

we think it necessary to preserve through the whole piece, lose the force of an elevated or passionate expression where the occasion really suggests it.

Having thus considered the manner in which fictitious distress must be managed to render it pleasing, let us reflect a little upon the moral tendency of such representations. Much has been said in favour of them, and they are generally thought to improve the tender and humane feelings; but this, I own, appears to me very dubious. That they exercise sensibility, is true; but sensibility does not increase with exercise. By the constitution of our frame our habits increase, our emotions decrease, by repeated acts; and thus a wise provision is made, that as our compassion grows weaker, its place should be supplied by habitual benevolence. But in these writings our sensibility is strongly called forth without any possibility of exerting itself in virtuous action, and those emotions, which we shall never feel again with equal force, are wasted without advantage. Nothing is more dangerous than to let virtuous impressions of any kind pass through the mind without producing their proper effect. The awakenings of remorse, virtuous shame and indignation, the glow of moral approbation—if they do not lead to action, grow less and less vivid every time they recur, till at length the mind grows absolutely callous. The being affected with a pathetic story is undoubtedly a sign of an amiable disposition, but perhaps no means of increasing it. On the contrary, young people, by a course of this kind of reading, often acquire something of that apathy and indifference which the experience of real life would have given them, without its advantages.

Another reason why plays and romances do not improve our humanity is, that they lead us to require a certain elegance of manners and delicacy of virtue which is not often found with poverty, ignorance and meanness. The objects of pity in romance are as different from those in real life as our husbandmen from the shepherds of Arcadia; and a girl who will sit weeping the whole night at the delicate distresses of a lady Charlotte, or lady Julia, shall be little moved at the complaint of her neighbour, who, in a homely phrase and vulgar accent, laments to her that she is not able to get bread for her family. Romance-writers likewise make great misfortunes so familiar to our ears, that we have hardly any pity to spare for the common accidents of life: but we ought to remember, that misery has a claim to relief, however we may be disgusted with its appearance; and that we must not fancy ourselves charitable, when we are only pleasing our imagination.

It would perhaps be better, if our romances were more like those of the old stamp, which tended to raise human nature, and inspire a certain grace and dignity of manners of which we have hardly the idea. The high notions of honour, the wild and fanciful spirit of adventure and romantic love, elevated the mind; our novels tend to depress and enfeeble it. Yet there is a species of this kind of writing which must ever afford an exquisite pleasure to persons of taste and sensibility; where noble sentiments are mixed with well-fancied incidents, pathetic touches with dignity and grace, and invention with chaste correctness. Such will ever interest our sweetest passions. I shall conclude this paper with the following tale.

In the happy period of the golden age, when all the celestial inhabitants descended to the earth, and conversed familiarly with mortals, among the most cherished of the heavenly powers were twins, the offspring of Jupiter, Love and Joy. Where they appeared, the flowers sprung up beneath their feet, the sun shone with a brighter radiance, and all nature seemed embellished by their presence. They were inseparable companions, and their growing attachment was favoured by Jupiter, who had decreed that a lasting union should be solemnized between them as soon as they were arrived at maturer years. But in the mean time the sons of men deviated from their native innocence; vice and ruin over-ran the earth with giant strides; and Astrea, with her train of celestial visitants, forsook their polluted abodes. Love alone remained, having been stolen away by Hope, who was his nurse, and conveyed by her to the forests of Arcadia, where he was brought up among the shepherds. But Jupiter assigned him a different partner, and commanded him to espouse Sorrow, the daughter of Ate. He complied with reluctance; for her features were harsh and disagreeable, her eyes sunk, her forehead contracted into perpetual wrinkles, and her temples were covered with a wreath of cypress and wormwood. From this union sprung a virgin, in whom might be traced a strong resemblance to both her parents; but the sullen and unamiable features of her mother were so mixed and blended with the sweetness of her father, that her countenance, though mournful, was highly pleasing. The maids and shepherds of the neighbouring plains gathered round, and called her Pity. A redbreast was observed to build in the cabin where she

was born; and while she was yet an infant, a dove, pursued by a hawk, flew into her bosom. This nymph had a dejected appearance, but so soft and gentle a mein that she was beloved to a degree of enthusiasm. Her voice was low and plaintive, but inexpressibly sweet; and she loved to lie for hours together on the banks of some wild and melancholy stream, singing to her lute. She taught men to weep, for she took a strange delight in tears; and often, when the virgins of the hamlet were assembled at their evening sports, she would steal in amongst them, and captivate their hearts by her tales full of a charming sadness. She wore on her head a garland composed of her father's myrtles twisted with her mother's cypress.

One day, as she sat musing by the waters of Helicon, her tears by chance fell into the fountain; and ever since, the Muses' spring has retained a strong taste of the infusion. Pity was commanded by Jupiter to follow the steps of her mother through the world, dropping balm into the wounds she made, and binding up the hearts she had broken. She follows with her hair loose, her bosom bare and throbbing, her garments torn by the briars, and her feet bleeding with the roughness of the path. The nymph is mortal, for her mother is so; and when she has fulfilled her destined course upon the earth, they shall both expire together, and Love be again united to Joy, his immortal and long-betrothed bride.

THOUGHTS ON THE DEVOTIONAL TASTE, AND ON SECTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS.*

It is observed by a late most amiable and elegant writer, that religion may be considered in three different views. As a system of opinions, its sole object is truth; and the only faculty that has any thing to do with it is reason, exerted in the freest and most dispassionate inquiry. As a principle regulating our conduct, religion is a habit, and like all other habits, of slow growth, and gaining strength only by repeated exertions. But it may likewise be considered as a taste, an affair of sentiment and feeling, and in this sense it is properly called devotion. Its seat is in the imagination and the passions, and it has its source in that relish for the sublime, the vast, and the beautiful, by which we taste the charms of poetry and other compositions that address our finer feelings; rendered more lively and interesting by a sense of gratitude for personal benefits. It is in a great degree constitutional, and is by no means found in exact proportion to the virtue of a character.

It is with relation to this last view of the subject that the observations in this essay are hazarded: for though, as a rule of life, the authority and salutary effects of

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* This Essay was first printed in 1775, prefixed to a collection of Devotional Pieces compiled from the Psalms of David.

religion are pretty universally acknowledged, and though its tenets have been defended with sufficient zeal, its affections languish, the spirit of devotion is certainly at a very low ebb amongst us, and what is surprising, it has fallen, I know not how, into a certain contempt, and is treated with great indifference, amongst many of those who value themselves on the purity of their faith, and who are distinguished by the sweetness of their morals. As the religious affections in a great measure rise and fall with the pulse, and are affected by every thing which acts upon the imagination, they are apt to run into strange excesses; and if directed by a melancholy or enthusiastic faith, their workings are often too strong for a weak head, or a delicate frame; and for this reason they have been almost excluded from religious worship by many persons of real piety. It is the character of the present age to allow little to sentiment, and all the warm and generous emotions are treated as romantic by the supercilious brow of a cold-hearted philosophy. The man of science, with an air of superiority, leaves them to some florid declaimer who professes to work upon the passions of the lower class, where they are so debased by noise and nonsense, that it is no wonder if they move disgust in those of elegant and better-informed minds.

Yet there is a devotion, generous, liberal, and humane, the child of more exalted feelings than base minds can enter into, which assimilates man to higher natures, and lifts him "above this visible diurnal sphere." Its pleasures are ultimate, and, when early cultivated, continue vivid even in that uncomfortable season of life when some of the passions are extinct, when imagination is dead, and the heart begins to contract within itself. Those

who want this taste, want a sense, a part of their nature, and should not presume to judge of feelings to which they must ever be strangers. No one pretends to be a judge in poetry or the fine arts, who has not both a natural and a cultivated relish for them; and shall the narrowminded children of earth, absorbed in low pursuits, dare to treat as visionary, objects which they have never made themselves acquainted with? Silence on such subjects will better become them. But to vindicate the pleasures of devotion to those who have neither taste nor knowledge about them, is not the present object. It rather deserves our inquiry, what causes have contributed to check the operation of religious impressions amongst those who have steady principles, and are well disposed to virtue.

And, in the first place, there is nothing more prejudicial to the feelings of a devout heart, than a habit of disputing on religious subjects. Free inquiry is undoubtedly necessary to establish a rational belief; but a disputatious spirit, and fondness for controversy, give the mind a sceptical turn, with an aptness to call in question the most established truths. It is impossible to preserve that deep reverence for the Deity with which we ought to regard him, when all his attributes, and even his very existence, become the subject of familiar debate. Candour demands that a man should allow his opponent an unlimited freedom of speech, and it is not easy in the heat of discourse to avoid falling into an indecent or careless expression; hence those who think seldomer of religious subjects, often treat them with more respect than those whose profession keeps them constantly in their view. A plain man of a serious turn would probably be shocked to hear questions of this nature treated with that ease and negli-

gence with which they are generally discussed by the practised theologian, or the young lively academic ready primed from the schools of logic and metaphysics. As the ear loses its delicacy by being obliged only to hear coarse and vulgar language, so the veneration for religion wears off by hearing it treated with disregard, though we ourselves are employed in defending it; and to this it is owing that many who have confirmed themselves in the belief of religion, have never been able to recover that strong and affectionate sense of it which they had before they began to inquire, and have wondered to find their devotion grown weaker when their faith was better grounded. Indeed, strong reasoning powers and quick feelings do not often unite in the same person. Men of a scientific turn seldom lay their hearts open to impression. Previously biassed by the love of system, they do indeed attend the offices of religion, but they dare not trust themselves with the preacher, and are continually upon the watch to observe whether every sentiment agrees with their own particular tenets.

The spirit of inquiry is easily distinguished from the spirit of disputation. A state of doubt is not a pleasant state. It is painful, anxious, and distressing beyond most others: it disposes the mind to dejection and modesty. Whoever therefore is so unfortunate as not to have settled his opinions in important points, will proceed in the search of truth with deep humility, unaffected earnestness, and a serious attention to every argument that may be offered, which he will be much rather inclined to revolve in his own mind, than to use as materials for dispute. Even with these dispositions, it is happy for a man when he does not find much to alter in the religious system he has

embraced; for if that undergoes a total revolution, his religious feelings are too generally so weakened by the shock, that they hardly recover again their original tone and vigour.

Shall we mention philosophy as an enemy to religion? God forbid! Philosophy,

> Daughter of Heaven, that slow ascending still
> Investigating sure the form of things,
> With radiant finger points to heaven again.

Yet there is a view in which she exerts an influence perhaps rather unfavourable to the fervour of simple piety. Philosophy does indeed enlarge our conceptions of the Deity, and gives us the sublimest ideas of his power and extent of dominion; but it raises him too high for our imaginations to take hold of, and in a great measure destroys that affectionate regard which is felt by the common class of pious christians. When, after contemplating the numerous productions of this earth, the various forms of being, the laws, the mode of their existence, we rise yet higher, and turn our eyes to that magnificent profusion of suns and systems which astronomy pours upon the mind—when we grow acquainted with the majestic order of nature, and those eternal laws which bind the material and intellectual worlds—when we trace the footsteps of creative energy through regions of unmeasured space, and still find new wonders disclosed and pressing upon the view,—we grow giddy with the prospect; the mind is astonished, confounded at its own insignificance; we think it almost impiety for a worm to lift its head from the dust, and address the Lord of so stupendous a universe; the idea of communion with our

Maker shocks us as presumption, and the only feeling the soul is capable of in such a moment is a deep and painful sense of its own abasement. It is true, the same philosophy teaches that the Deity is intimately present through every part of this complicated system, and neglects not any of his works: but this is a truth which is believed without being felt; our imagination cannot here keep pace with our reason, and the sovereign of nature seems ever further removed from us in proportion as we enlarge the bounds of his creation.

Philosophy represents the Deity in too abstracted a manner to engage our affections. A Being without hatred and without fondness, going on in one steady course of even benevolence, neither delighted with praises, nor moved by importunity, does not interest us so much as a character open to the feelings of indignation, the soft relentings of mercy, and the partialities of particular affections. We require some common nature, or at least the appearance of it, on which to build our intercourse. It is also a fault of which philosophers are often guilty, that they dwell too much in generals. Accustomed to reduce every thing to the operation of general laws, they turn our attention to larger views, attempt to grasp the whole order of the universe, and in the zeal of a systematic spirit seldom leave room for those particular and personal mercies which are the food of gratitude. They trace the great outline of nature, but neglect the colouring which gives warmth and beauty to the piece. As in poetry it is not vague and general description, but a few striking circumstances clearly related and strongly worked up—as in a landscape it is not such a vast extensive range of country as pains the eye to stretch to its limits, but a beautiful, well-defined prospect, which

gives the most pleasure; so neither are those unbounded views in which philosophy delights, so much calculated to touch the heart as home views and nearer objects. The philosopher offers up general praises on the altar of universal nature; the devout man, on the altar of his heart, presents his own sighs, his own thanksgivings, his own earnest desires: the former worship is more sublime, the latter more personal and affecting.

We are likewise too scrupulous in our public exercises, and too studious of accuracy. A prayer strictly philosophical must ever be a cold and dry composition. From an over-anxious fear of admitting any expression that is not strictly proper, we are apt to reject all warm and pathetic imagery, and, in short, every thing that strikes upon the heart and the senses. But it may be said, "If the Deity be indeed so sublime a Being, and if his designs and manner are so infinitely beyond our comprehension, how can a thinking mind join in the addresses of the vulgar, or avoid being overwhelmed with the indistinct vastness of such an idea?" Far be it from me to deny that awe and veneration must ever make a principal part of our regards to the Master of the universe, or to defend that style of indecent familiarity which is yet more shocking than indifference: but let it be considered that we cannot hope to avoid all improprieties in speaking of such a Being; that the most philosophical address we can frame is probably no more free from them than the devotions of the vulgar; that the Scriptures set us an example of accommodating the language of prayer to common conceptions, and making use of figures and modes of expression far from being strictly defensible; and that, upon the whole, it is safer to trust to our genuine feelings, feelings

implanted in us by the God of nature, than to any metaphysical subtleties. He has impressed me with the idea of trust and confidence, and my heart flies to him in danger; of mercy to forgive, and I melt before him in penitence; of bounty to bestow, and I ask of him all I want or wish for. I may make use of an inaccurate expression, I may paint him to my imagination too much in the fashion of humanity; but while my heart is pure, while I depart not from the line of moral duty, the error is not dangerous. Too critical a spirit is the bane of every thing great or pathetic. In our creeds let us be guarded; let us there weigh every syllable; but in compositions addressed to the heart, let us give freer scope to the language of the affections, and the overflowing of a warm and generous disposition.

Another cause which most effectually operates to check devotion, is ridicule. I speak not here of open derision of things sacred; but there is a certain ludicrous style in talking of such subjects, which, without any ill design, does much harm; and perhaps those whose studies or profession lead them to be chiefly conversant with the offices of religion, are most apt to fall into this impropriety: for their ideas being chiefly taken from that source, their common conversation is apt to be tinctured with fanciful allusions to scripture expressions, to prayers, &c., which have all the effect of a parody, and, like parodies, destroy the force of the finest passage, by associating it with something trivial and ridiculous. Of this nature is Swift's well-known jest of "Dearly beloved Roger," which whoever has it strong upon his memory, will find it impossible to attend with proper seriousness to that part of the service. We should take great care to keep clear from all

these trivial associations, in whatever we wish to be regarded as venerable.

Another species of ridicule to be avoided, is that kind of sneer often thrown upon those whose hearts are giving way to honest emotion. There is an extreme delicacy in all the finer affections, which makes them shy of observation, and easily checked. Love, wonder, pity, the enthusiasm of poetry, shrink from the notice of even an indifferent eye, and never indulge themselves freely but in solitude, or when heightened by the powerful force of sympathy. Observe an ingenuous youth at a well-wrought tragedy. If all around him are moved, he suffers his tears to flow freely; but if a single eye meets him with a glance of contemptuous indifference, he can no longer enjoy his sorrow; he blushes at having wept, and in a moment his heart is shut up to every impression of tenderness. It is sometimes mentioned as a reproach to protestants, that they are susceptible of a false shame when observed in the exercises of their religion, from which papists are free. But I take this to proceed from the purer nature of our religion; for the less it is made to consist in outward pomp and mechanical worship, and the more it has to do with the finer affections of the heart, the greater will be the reserve and delicacy which attend the expression of its sentiments. Indeed, ridicule ought to be very sparingly used; for it is an enemy to every thing sublime or tender: the least degree of it, whether well or ill founded, suddenly and instantaneously stops the workings of passion; and those who indulge a talent that way, would do well to consider, that they are rendering themselves for ever incapable of all the higher pleasures either of taste or morals. More especially do these cold pleasantries

hurt the minds of youth, by checking that generous expansion of heart to which their open tempers are naturally prone, and producing a vicious shame, through which they are deprived of the enjoyment of heroic sentiments or generous action.

In the next place, let us not be superstitiously afraid of superstition. It shows great ignorance of the human heart, and the springs by which its passions are moved, to neglect taking advantage of the impression which particular circumstances, times and seasons, naturally make upon the mind. The root of all superstition is the principle of the association of ideas, by which, objects naturally indifferent become dear and venerable, through their connexion with interesting ones. It is true, this principle has been much abused: it has given rise to pilgrimages innumerable, worship of relics, and priestly power. But let us not carry our ideas of purity and simplicity so far as to neglect it entirely. Superior natures, it is possible, may be equally affected with the same truth at all times, and in all places; but we are not so made. Half the pleasures of elegant minds are derived from this source. Even the enjoyments of sense, without it, would lose much of their attraction. Who does not enter into the sentiment of the poet, in that passage so full of nature and truth—

> He that outlives this hour, and comes safe home,
> Shall stand on tiptoe when this day is named,
> And rouse him at the name of Crispian:
> He that outlives this day, and sees old age,
> Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
> And say, To-morrow is St. Crispian.

But were not the benefits of the victory equally apparent on any other day of the year? Why commemorate the anniversary with such distinguished regard? Those who can ask such a question, have never attended to some of the strongest instincts in our nature. Yet it has lately been the fashion, amongst those who call themselves rational Christians, to treat as puerile, all attentions of this nature when relative to religion. They would

> Kiss with pious lips the sacred earth
> Which gave a Hampden or a Russel birth;—

they will visit the banks of Avon with all the devotion of enthusiastic zeal; celebrate the birth-day of the hero and the patriot; and yet pour contempt upon the Christian who suffers himself to be warmed by similar circumstances relating to his Master, or the connexion of sentiments of peculiar reverence with times, places, and men which have been appropriated to the service of religion. A wise preacher will not, from a fastidious refinement, disdain to affect his hearers from the season of the year, the anniversary of a national blessing, a remarkable escape from danger, or, in short, any incident that is sufficiently guarded, and far enough removed from what is trivial, to be out of danger of becoming ludicrous.

It will not be amiss to mention here, a reproach which has been cast upon devotional writers,—that they are apt to run into the language of love. Perhaps the charge would be full as just, had they said that Love borrows the language of Devotion; for the votaries of that passion are fond of using those exaggerated expressions, which can

suit nothing below Divinity; and you can hardly address the greatest of all beings in a strain of more profound adoration, than the lover uses to the object of his attachment. But the truth is, devotion does in no small degree resemble that fanciful and elevated kind of love which depends not on the senses. Nor is the likeness to be wondered at, since both have their source in the love of beauty and excellence. Both are exceeding prone to superstition, and apt to run into romantic excesses. Both are nourished by poetry and music, and felt with the greatest fervour in the warmer climates. Both carry the mind out of itself, and powerfully refine the affections from every thing gross, low, and selfish.

But it is time to retire; we are treading upon enchanted ground, and shall be suspected by many of travelling towards the regions of chivalry and old romance. And were it so, many a fair majestic idea might be gathered from those forgotten walks, which would well answer the trouble of transplanting. It must however be owned, that very improper language has formerly been used on these subjects; but there cannot be any great danger of such excesses, where the mind is guarded by a rational faith, and the social affections have full scope in the free commerce and legitimate connexions of society.

Having thus considered the various causes which contribute to deaden the feelings of devotion, it may not be foreign to the subject to inquire in what manner they are affected by the different modes of religion. I speak not of opinions; for these have much less influence upon the heart, than the circumstances which attend particular persuasions. A sect may only differ from an establishment, as one absurd opinion differs from another: but there is a

character and cast of manners belonging to each, which will be perfectly distinct; and of a sect, the character will vary as it is a rising or a declining sect, persecuted or at ease. Yet while divines have wearied the world with canvassing contrary doctrines and jarring articles of faith, the philosopher has not considered, as the subject deserved, what situation was most favourable to virtue, sentiment, and pure manners. To a philosophic eye, free from prejudice, and accustomed to large views of the great polity carried on in the moral world, perhaps varying and opposite forms may appear proper, and well calculated for their respective ends; and he will neither wish entirely to destroy the old, nor wholly to crush the new.

The great line of division between different modes of religion, is formed by establishments and sects. In an infant sect, which is always in some degree a persecuted one, the strong union and entire affection of its followers, the sacrifices they make to principle, the force of novelty, and the amazing power of sympathy, all contribute to cherish devotion. It rises even to passion, and absorbs every other sentiment. Severity of manners imposes respect; and the earnestness of the new proselytes renders them insensible to injury, or even to ridicule. A strain of eloquence, often coarse indeed, but strong and persuasive, works like leaven in the heart of the people. In this state, all outward helps are superfluous, the living spirit of devotion is amongst them, the world sinks away to nothing before it, and every object but one is annihilated. The social principle mixes with the flame, and renders it more intense; strong parties are formed, and friends or lovers are not more closely connected than the members of these little communities.

It is this kind of devotion, a devotion which those of more settled and peaceable times can only guess at, which made amends to the first Christians for all they resigned, and all they suffered: this draws the martyr to a willing death, and enables the confessor to endure a voluntary poverty. But this stage cannot last long: the heat of persecution abates, and the fervour of zeal feels a proportional decay. Now comes on the period of reasoning and examination. The principles which have produced such mighty effects on the minds of men, acquire an importance, and become objects of the public attention. Opinions are canvassed. Those who before bore testimony to their religion only by patient suffering, now defend it with argument; and all the keenness of polemical disquisition is awakened on either side. The fair and generous idea of religious liberty, which never originates in the breast of a triumphant party, now begins to unfold itself. To vindicate these rights, and explain these principles, learning, which in the former state was despised, is assiduously cultivated by the sectaries; their minds become enlightened, and a large portion of knowledge, especially religious knowledge, is diffused through their whole body. Their manners are less austere, without having as yet lost any thing of their original purity. Their ministers gain respect as writers, and their pulpit discourses are studied and judicious. The most unfavourable circumstance of this æra is, that those who dissent, are very apt to acquire a critical and disputatious spirit; for, being continually called upon to defend doctrines in which they differ from the generality, their attention is early turned to the argumentative part of religion; and hence we see that sermons, which afford food for this taste, are with them

thought of more importance than prayer and praise, though these latter are undoubtedly the more genuine and indispensible parts of public worship.

This then is the second period: the third approaches fast; men grow tired of a controversy which becomes insipid from being exhausted; persecution has not only ceased, it begins to be forgotten; and from the absence of opposition in either kind, springs a fatal and spiritless indifference. That sobriety, industry, and abstinence from fashionable pleasures, which distinguished the fathers, has made the sons wealthy; and, eager to enjoy their riches, they long to mix with that world, a separation from which was the best guard to their virtues. A secret shame creeps in upon them when they acknowledge their relation to a disesteemed sect; they therefore endeavour to file off its peculiarities, but in so doing they destroy its very being. Connexions with the establishment, whether of intimacy, business, or relationship, which formerly, from their superior zeal, turned to the advantage of the sect, now operate against it. Yet these connexions are formed more frequently than ever; and those who a little before, soured by the memory of recent suffering, betrayed perhaps an aversion from having any thing in common with the church, now affect to come as near it as possible; and, like a little boat that takes a large vessel in tow, the sure consequence is, the being drawn into its vortex. They aim at elegance and show in their places of worship, the appearance of their preachers, &c., and thus impoliticly awaken a taste it is impossible they should ever gratify. They have worn off many forbidding singularities, and are grown more amiable and pleasing. But those singularities were of use: they set a mark upon

them, they pointed them out to the world, and thus obliged persons so distinguished to exemplary strictness. No longer obnoxious to the world, they are open to all the seductions of it. Their minister, that respectable character which once inspired reverence and affectionate esteem, their teacher and their guide, is now dwindled into the mere leader of the public devotions; or, lower yet, a person hired to entertain them every week with an elegant discourse. In proportion as his importance decreases, his salary sits heavy on the people; and he feels himself depressed by that most cruel of all mortifications to a generous mind, the consciousness of being a burden upon those from whom he derives his scanty support. Unhappily, amidst this change of manners, there are forms of strictness, and a set of phrases introduced in their first enthusiam, which still subsist: these they are ashamed to use, and know not how to decline; and their behaviour, in consequence of them, is awkward and irresolute. Those who have set out with the largest share of mysticism and flighty zeal, find themselves particularly embarrassed by this circumstance.

When things are come to this crisis, their tendency is evident: and though the interest and name of a sect may be kept up for a time by the generosity of former ages, the abilities of particular men, or that reluctance which keeps a generous mind from breaking old connexions; it must, in a short course of years, melt away into the establishment, the womb and the grave of all other modes of religion.

An establishment affects the mind by splendid buildings, music, the mysterious pomp of ancient ceremonies; by the sacredness of peculiar orders, habits, and titles; by its

secular importance; and by connecting with religion, ideas of order, dignity, and antiquity. It speaks to the heart through the imagination and the senses; and though it never can raise devotion so high as we have described it in a beginning sect, it will preserve it from ever sinking into contempt. As to a woman in the glow of health and beauty the most careless dress is the most becoming, but when the freshness of youth is worn off, greater attention is necessary, and rich ornaments are required to throw an air of dignity round her person; so while a sect retains its first plainness, simplicity and affectionate zeal, it wants nothing an establishment could give; but that once declined, the latter becomes far more respectable. The faults of an establishment grow venerable from length of time; the improvements of a sect appear whimsical from their novelty. Ancient families, fond of rank, and of that order which secures it to them, are on the side of the former. Traders incline to the latter; and so do generally men of genius, as it favours their originality of thinking. An establishment leans to superstition, a sect to enthusiasm; the one is a more dangerous and violent excess, the other more fatally debilitates the powers of the mind; the one is a deeper colouring, the other a more lasting dye; but the coldness and languor of a declining sect produces scepticism. Indeed, a sect is never stationary, as it depends entirely on passions and opinions; though it often attains excellence, it never rests in it, but is always in danger of one extreme or the other; whereas an old establishment, whatever else it may want, possesses the grandeur arising from stability.

We learn to respect whatever respects itself; and are easily led to think that system requires no alteration,

which never admits of any. It is this circumstance, more than any other, which gives a dignity to that accumulated mass of error, the church of Rome. A fabric which has weathered many successive ages, though the architecture be rude, the parts disproportionate, and overloaded with ornaments, strikes us with a sort of admiration, merely from its having held so long together.

The minister of a sect, and of an establishment, is upon a very different footing. The former is like the popular leader of an army; he is obeyed with enthusiasm while he is obeyed at all; but his influence depends on opinion, and is entirely personal: the latter resembles a general appointed by the monarch; he has soldiers less warmly devoted to him, but more steady, and better disciplined. The dissenting teacher is nothing if he have not the spirit of a martyr; and is the scorn of the world, if he be not above the world. The clergyman, possessed of power and affluence, and for that reason chosen from among the better ranks of people, is respected as a gentleman, though not venerated as an apostle; and as his profession generally obliges him to decent manners, his order is considered as a more regular and civilized class of men than their fellow-subjects of the same rank. The dissenting teacher, separated from the people, but not raised above them, invested with no power, entitled to no emoluments, if he cannot acquire for himself authority, must feel the bitterness of dependence. The ministers of the former denomination cannot fall, but in some violent convulsion of the state: those of the latter, when indifference and mutual neglect begin to succeed to that close union which once subsisted between them and their followers, lose their former influence without resource; the dignity and

weight of their office is gone for ever; they feel the insignificancy of their pretensions, their spirits sink, and, except they take refuge in some collateral pursuit, and stand candidates for literary fame, they slide into an ambiguous and undecided character; their time is too often sacrificed to frivolous compliances; their manners lose their austerity, without having proportionally gained in elegance; the world does not acknowledge them, for they are not of the world; it cannot esteem them, for they are not superior to the world.

Upon the whole, then, it should seem, that the strictness of a sect (and it can only be respectable by being strict) is calculated for a few finer spirits, who make religion their chief object. As to the much larger number, on whom she has only an imperfect influence, making them decent if not virtuous, and meliorating the heart without greatly changing it; for all these the genius of an establishment is more eligible, and better fitted to cherish that moderate devotion of which alone they are capable. All those who have not strength of mind to think for themselves, who would live to virtue without denying the world, who wish much to be religious, but more to be genteel, naturally flow into the establishment. If it offered no motives to their mind, but such as are perfectly pure and spiritual, their devotion would not for that be more exalted, it would die away to nothing; and it is better their minds should receive only a tincture of religion, than be wholly without it. Those too, whose passions are regular and equable, and who do not aim at abstracted virtues, are commonly placed to most advantage within the pale of the national faith.

All the greater exertions of the mind,—spirit to reform, fortitude and constancy to suffer,—can be expected only

from those who, forsaking the common road, are exercised in a peculiar course of moral discipline: but it should be remembered, that these exertions cannot be expected from every character, nor on every occasion. Indeed, religion is a sentiment which takes such strong hold on all the most powerful principles of our nature, that it may easily be carried to excess. The Deity never meant our regards to him should engross the mind: that indifference to sensible objects, which many moralists preach, is not perhaps desirable, except where the mind is raised above its natural tone, and extraordinary situations call forth extraordinary virtues.

If the peculiar advantages of a sect were well understood, its followers would not be impatient of those moderate restraints which do not rise to persecution, nor affect any of their more material interests: for, do they not bind them closer to each other, cherish zeal, and keep up the love of liberty? What is the language of such restraints? Do they not say, with a prevailing voice, Let the timorous and the worldly depart; no one shall be of this persuasion, who is not sincere, disinterested, conscientious. It is notwithstanding proper, that men should be sensible of all their rights, assert them boldly, and protest against every infringement; for it may be of advantage to bear what yet it is unjustifiable in others to inflict.

Neither would dissenters, if they attended to their real interests, be so ambitious as they generally are, of rich converts. Such converts only accelerate their decline; they relax their discipline, and they acquire an influence very pernicious in societies which ought to breathe nothing but the spirit of equality.

Sects are always strict in proportion to the corruption

of establishments and the licentiousness of the times, and they are useful in the same proportion. Thus the austere lives of the primitive Christians counterbalanced the vices of that abandoned period; and thus the puritans in the reign of Charles the Second seasoned with a wholesome severity the profligacy of public manners. They were less amiable than their descendants of the present day; but to be amiable was not the object; they were of public utility; and their scrupulous sanctity (carried to excess, themselves only considered,) like a powerful antiseptic, opposed the contagion breathed from a most dissolute court. In like manner, that sect, one of whose most striking characteristics is a beautiful simplicity of dialect, served to check that strain of servile flattery and Gothic compliment so prevalent in the same period, and to keep up some idea of that manly plainness with which one human being ought to address another.

Thus have we seen that different modes of religion, though they bear little good-will to each other, are nevertheless mutually useful. Perhaps there is not an establishment so corrupt, as not to make the gross of mankind better than they would be without it. Perhaps there is not a sect so eccentric, but that it has set some one truth in the strongest light, or carried some one virtue, before neglected, to its utmost height, or loosened some obstinate and long-rooted prejudice. They answer their end; they die away; others spring up, and take their place. So the purer part of the element, continually drawn off from the mighty mass of waters, forms rivers, which running in various directions, fertilize large countries; yet, always tending towards the ocean, every accession to their bulk or grandeur but precipitates their course, and hastens

their re-union with the common reservoir from which they were separated.

In the mean time, the devout heart always finds associates suitable to its disposition, and the particular cast of its virtues; while the continual flux and reflux of opinions prevents the active principles from stagnating. There is an analogy between things material and immaterial. As, from some late experiments in philosophy, it has been found that the process of vegetation restores and purifies vitiated air; so does that moral and political ferment which accompanies the growth of new sects, communicate a kind of spirit and elasticity necessary to the vigour and health of the soul, but soon lost amidst the corrupted breath of an indiscriminate multitude.

There remains only to add, lest the preceding view of sects and establishments should in any degree be misapprehended, that it has nothing to do with the *truth* of opinions, and relates only to the influence of the adventitious circumstances attending them may have upon the manners and morals of their followers. It is therefore calculated to teach us candour, but not indifference. Large views of the moral polity of the world may serve to illustrate the providence of God in his different dispensations, but are not made to regulate our own individual conduct, which must conscientiously follow our own opinions and belief. We may see much good in an establishment, the doctrines of which we cannot give our assent to without violating our integrity; we may respect the tendencies of a sect, the tenets of which we utterly disapprove. We may think practices useful which we cannot adopt without hypocrisy. We may think all religions beneficial, and believe of one alone that it is true.

THE CURÉ OF THE BANKS OF THE RHONE.

WRITTEN IN 1791.

A FRIEND of mine, who pretends to have very good information from the Continent, communicated to me the following account: I confess it comes in a shape a little questionable: however, I send it you Mr. Editor, exactly as my friend read it to me, from a private letter which he said he had just received.

"A few days after the bishop of Paris and his vicars had set the example of renouncing their clerical character, a curé from a village on the banks of the Rhone, followed by some of his parishioners with an offering of gold and silver saints, chalices, rich vestments, &c., presented himself at the bar of the House. The sight of the gold put the Convention in a very good humour, and the curé, a thin venerable looking man with gray hairs, was ordered to speak. 'I come,' said he, 'from the village of ——, where the only good building standing (for the chateau has been pulled down) is a very fine church; my parishioners beg you will take it to make an hospital for the sick and wounded of both parties—they are both equally our countrymen: the gold and silver, part of which we have brought you, they entreat you will devote to the service of the state, and that you will cast the bells into cannon to drive

away its foreign invaders: for myself, I come with great pleasure to resign my letters of ordination, of induction, and every deed and title by which I have been constituted a member of your ecclesiastical polity. Here are the papers; you may burn them if you please in the same fire with the genealogical trees and patents of the nobility. I desire likewise, that you will discontinue my salary. I am still able to support myself by the labour of my hands, and I beg of you to believe that I never felt sincerer joy than I now do in making this renunciation. I have longed to see this day; I see it, and am glad.'

"When the old man had done speaking, the applauses were immoderate. You are an honest man, said they all at once; you are a brave fellow; you do not believe in God;—and the president advanced to give him the fraternal embrace. The curé did not seem greatly elated with these tokens of approbation; he retired back a few steps, and thus resumed his discourse. 'Before you applaud my sentiments, it is fit you should understand them; perhaps they may not entirely coincide with your own. I rejoice in this day, not because I wish to see religion degraded, but because I wish to see it exalted and purified. By dissolving its alliance with the state, you have given it dignity and independence. You have done it a piece of service which its well-wishers would, perhaps, never have had courage to render it, but which is the only thing wanted to make it appear in its genuine beauty and lustre. Nobody will now say of me, that I am performing the offices of my religion as a trade; he is paid for telling the people such and such things; he is hired to keep up an useless piece of mummery. They cannot now say this, and therefore I feel myself raised in my own esteem,

and shall speak to them with a confidence and frankness which, before this, I never durst venture to assume. We resign without reluctance our gold and silver images and embroidered vestments, because we have never found that gold and silver made the heart more pure, or the affections more heavenly: we can also spare our churches, for the heart that wishes to lift itself up to God will never be at a loss for room to do it in: but we cannot spare our religion; because, to tell you the truth, we never had so much occasion for it. I understand that you accuse us priests of having told the people a great many falsehoods. I suspect this may have been the case; but till this day we have never been allowed to inquire whether the things which we taught them were true or not. You required us formerly to receive them all without proof, and you would have us now reject them all without discrimination; neither of these modes of conduct become philosophers, such as you would be thought to be. I am going to employ myself diligently along with my parishioners to sift the wheat from the chaff, the true from the false: if we are not successful, we shall be at least sincere. I do fear, indeed, that while I wore these vestments which we have brought you, and spoke in that gloomy building which we have given up to you, I told my flock a great many idle stories. I cannot but hope, however, that the errors we have fallen into have not been very material, since the village has been in general sober and good, the peasants are honest, docile and laborious, the husbands love their wives, and the wives their husbands; they are fortunately not too rich to be compassionate, and they have constanly relieved the sick and fugitives of all parties whenever it has lain in their way. I think, therefore, what I have taught them

cannot be so very much amiss. You want to extirpate priests; but will you hinder the ignorant from applying for instruction, the unhappy for comfort and hope, the unlearned from looking up to the learned? If you do not, you will have priests, by whatever name you may order them to be called; but it certainly is not necessary they should wear a particular dress, or be appointed by state-letters of ordination. My letters of ordination are my zeal, my charity, my ardent love for my dear children of the village; if I were more learned, I would add my knowledge, but alas! we all know very little; to man every error is pardonable but want of humility. We have a public walk with a spreading elm at the end of it, and a circle of green round it, with a convenient bench. Here I shall draw together the children as they are playing around me. I shall point to the vines laden with fruit, to the orchards, to the herds of cattle lowing around us, to the distant hills stretching one behind another; and they will ask me, How came all these things? I shall tell them all I know or have heard from wise men who have lived before me; they will be penetrated with love and veneration; they will kneel,—I shall kneel with them; they will not be at my feet, but all of us at the feet of that good Being, whom we shall worship together; and thus they will recieve within their tender minds a religion.—The old men will come sometimes from having deposited under the green sod one of their companions, and place themselves by my side; they will look wistfully at the turf, and anxiously inquire—Is he gone for ever? Shall we soon be like him? Will no morning break over the tomb? When the wicked cease from troubling, will the good cease from doing good?

We will talk of these things: I will comfort them. I will tell them of the goodness of God; I will speak to them of a life to come; I will bid them hope for a state of retribution.—In a clear night, when the stars slide over our heads, they will ask what these bright bodies are, and by what rules they rise and set? and we will converse about different forms of being, and distant worlds in the immensity of space, governed by the same laws, till we feel our minds raised from what is grovelling, and refined from what is sordid.——You talk of Nature,—this is Nature; and if you could at this moment extinguish religion in the minds of the world, thus would it be kindled again, and thus again excite the curiosity, and interest the feelings of mankind. You have changed our holidays; you have an undoubted right, as our civil governors, so to do; it is very immaterial whether they are kept once in seven days, or once in ten; some, however, you will leave us, and when they occur, I shall tell those who choose to hear me, of the beauty and utility of virtue, of the dignity of right conduct. We shall talk of good men who have lived in the world, and of the doctrines they taught; and if any of them have been persecuted and put to death for their virtue, we shall reverence their memories the more. —I hope in all this there is no harm. There is a book out of which I have sometimes taught my people: it says we are to love those who do us hurt, and to pour oil and wine into the wounds of the stranger. It has enabled my children to bear patiently the spoiling of their goods, and to give up their own interest for the general welfare. I think it cannot be a very bad book. I wish more of it had been read in your town, perhaps you would not have had quite so many assassinations and massacres. In this

book we hear of a person called Jesus: some worship him as a God; others, as I am told, say it is wrong to do so;—some teach that he existed from the beginning of ages; others, that he was born of Joseph and Mary. I cannot tell whether these controversies will ever be decided; but in the mean time I think we cannot do otherwise than well, in imitating him; for I learn that he loved the poor, and went about doing good.

"'Fellow citizens, as I travelled hither from my own village, I saw peasants sitting among the smoking ruins of their cottages; rich men and women reduced to miserable poverty; fathers lamenting their children in the bloom and pride of youth: and I said to myself, these people cannot afford to part with their religion. But indeed you cannot take it away; if, contrary to your first declaration you choose to try the experiment of persecuting it, you will only make us prize it more, and love it better. Religion, true or false, is so necessary to the mind of man, that even you have begun to make yourselves a new one. You are sowing the seeds of superstition; and in two or three generations your posterity will be worshipping some clumsy idol, with the rites, perhaps, of a bloody Moloch, or a lascivious Thammuz. It was not worth while to have been philosophers and destroyed the images of our saints for this; but let every one choose the religion that pleases him; I and my parishioners are content with ours,—it teaches us to bear the evils your childish or sanguinary decrees have helped to bring upon the country.'"

The curé turned his footsteps homeward, and the Convention looked for some minutes on one another, before they resumed their work of blood.

ZEPHYRUS AND FLORA.

LETTER TO MRS. W——.

DEAR MADAM,

I THINK it my duty, as well from the high esteem I bear yourself, as from the tender and solicitous affection I feel for your lovely daughter, to inform you of an affair between her and one who has lately been fluttering about her; and for whom, young as she is, she seems to have conceived an extraordinary inclination. Of this you will be convinced, madam, when I assure you she often walks in the fields purposely to meet him; and that on her return I have seen her lips and cheeks improved in their colour by his kisses. It is but within these few weeks that this lover of hers has frequented the environs of Hampstead, for he spent the winter between Lisbon and the Canary Islands; and since his return, which by her has been passionately longed for, her fondness for walking has been much more apparent. Her excursions to the Heath, and her parties to West-end, particularly when she gave me the slip the other day, have been all planned with the hope of meeting him. Nor can I wonder, indeed, that she admires so pretty a fellow; for he is a light airy being like herself, as playful and as frolicsome. He dresses in a light garment of the thinnest blue silk, fluttering in a thousand different folds, and by way of epaulette two silver

wings peeping above his shoulders. His breath is made up of sighs, and perfumed with violets; and his whispers, especially at this season of the year, have a certain prevailing languishment and softness in them, that few can resist. He is fond of caressing the opening roses; and no birthnight beau is more powerfully scented with Mareschal powder than he is with every blossom of the spring. But then he is a general lover, inconstant as he is gay; noted for levity, here today and gone tomorrow, hovering about every beautiful object without attaching himself to one. To fix him would be as difficult as to arrest a sunbeam or to hold a wave between your fingers. Yet I am sorry to say, madam, your daughter absolutely courts this *volage*, and allows him liberties which a prudent mother like yourself must tremble at. He delights to play with her fair hair; sometimes he throws it over her forehead, and almost covers her face with it. Sometimes he takes a single lock, and plays it about her temples; now he spreads her tresses all over her graceful shoulders; and then lifts them up, or gently parts them, to discover the elegant turn and whiteness of her neck, giving them all the while a thousand kisses. Why need I mention what passes before your eyes, under your own window? It is there that I have seen him busied in wafting her to and fro with an easy motion, when her light form dances through the air in the swing you have lately put up, while he catches her fluttering garment and throws it into every varying fold his fancy dictates. It may be, however, that you may not think these sportive liberties of great consequence to one so young as your daughter is: but I am not without apprehensions that he may some day or other absolutely run away with her. I the rather fear this, as a brother of

his, a rough blustering fellow, did once carry off a young lady whose parents had rejected his addresses, as is well known to all who are acquainted with the anecdotes of the family. It is true, he that I speak of has neither the strength nor the impetuosity of his brother; but when I consider the peculiar lightness and airiness of the nymph in question, the enterprise appears to me very practicable.

I have only to add, that his amour with *Flora** is of long standing; and so little is it a secret in the world that every schoolboy is acquainted with it. I doubt not, madam, but you will take the measures your prudence must suggest on this occasion. All my motive in this affair has been to prove with how much zeal and affection I am,

Dear madam,

Your devoted and obedient.

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* The name of this young lady was Flora.

ON EVIL:—A RHAPSODY.

O Evil, creature abhorred of God and man!—whence is thy origin? how did so deformed and monstrous a birth gain entrance into the fair creation? Canst thou be from God,—since thou art so opposite to his nature? And if from man,—why was he suffered to produce thee? Weak, unexperienced, unsuspecting man,—why was he permitted to bring such enormous ruin on his own head, and that of all his posterity? Was there no warning voice, no sheltering hand, to save him from such a fall—to save thy image, O God, from pollution? Let us sit down in sad shades, and join the moral poet,

"Who mourns for virtue lost, and ruined man."

What fair, what amiable creatures were our first parents when they came from the hands of their Maker! They knew neither Pain, nor Sin, the sire of Pain; nor Shame, the daughter of Sin. Innocent, happy, and immortal:—so far from practising evil, that they had not even the knowledge of it. Their passions, nicely balanced, admitted no internal war. A milky innocence in their veins, their eyes beaming with smiles,—the smiles of candour and simplicity,—they were the head of the happy creation, till one fatal moment ruined all:—the garden of paradise is shut for ever; and man (unhappy outcast!)—exposed to the war of elements without and passions within; his

peace broken, his heart torn by the conflict of jarring emotions; his life worn away by perplexing doubts and heart-withering care,—moistens his daily bread with tears: and after struggling a few years in the hard, unequal warfare, he returns to the dust from whence he was taken.

Such is the dark side of the picture.—But let us change the view, and see whether in reality the human race have such great reason to lament the fall of their first progenitor. Whether *virtuous* man now, is not a nobler creature than *sinless* man then?—the pupil of reason, than the child of nature?—the follower of the second, than the offspring of the first Adam? Man in his first state had a mind untainted with crimes; but unformed, uncultivated, void of moral ideas, he could not rise, but by his fall; he could not attain to more perfection, but by moral discipline; he could not know the joys of self-approbation, without being subject to remorse,—of sympathy, without feeling distress. Had he been always innocent, he had been nothing more than innocent;—had he never known his weakness, he had never acquired strength. Behold him now, fashioned by the hand of culture, and shining through the dark cloud of ruin, guilt and pain, that is spread over him. What a different creature from the former man! He now knows vice, but abhors it; temptation, but resists it; error, but he laments it. His passions were once balanced, they are now subdued; he has tasted good and evil, and he knows to choose the one and refuse the other. Intellectual ideas crowd upon him, and a new world opens within his breast. His nature is raised, refined, exalted: he lives by faith, by devotion, by spiritual communion, by repentance—he, weeping beneath the bitter cross, washes off the stain of sin. The [illegible] his feet; for be-

hold he prayeth, and things unseen become present to his soul. Meek resignation blunts the edge of suffering; and triumphant hope looks beyond all suffering, to glory and to joy. Thus advancing through life, he learns some new lesson at every step,—till by receiving, but still more by conferring, benefits; by bearing, and still further by forgiving, injuries,—his mind is disciplined, his moral sense awakened, his taste for beauty, order and rectitude, unfolded. He becomes endeared to those he has wept and prayed and struggled with through this vale of sin and suffering;—he learns to pity and to love his fellow-partners of mortality; till at length the divine flame of universal charity begins to kindle in his breast. Then is the æra of a new birth; then does he become partaker of a divine nature: sense is mortified, passion is subdued, self is annihilated. And is not this a noble creature? a being worth forming by so expensive and painful a process? a being God may delight in? a faithful well-disciplined soldier, fit to co-operate in any plan, or mingle with any order of rational and moral beings throughout the wide creation? Place him where you will, he has learned to follow, to trust in, the Supreme Being: he has learned humility from his errors, steadiness and watchfulness from his weakness; his virtues depend not now on constitution, but on firm principles and established habits. Is this the feeble being whose infant mind was unable to resist the allurements of forbidden fruit? who so easily listened to the seduction of the tempter? See him now resisting unto blood, superior to principalities and powers, to wicked men and bad angels:—neither terrors nor pleasures can move him. He once believed not the living voice of his Maker; having not seen, he now believes. His gratitude

once was faint and languid, though he was surrounded with pleasant things: he now loves God, though overwhelmed with sorrow and pain; trusts in him, though surrounded with difficulties; hopes even against hope, and prays without ceasing. His hopes now are superior to his joys then. Glorious exchange! from reposing on flowers, to tread upon stars,—from naked purity, to a robe of glory,—from the food which cometh out of the earth, to the bread which cometh down from heaven. For ignorance of ill he hath knowledge of good; for smiles of innocence, tears of rapture; for the bowers of paradise, the gates of heaven. Hadst thou, Adam, never fallen, shepherds and husbandmen only would have sprung from thee;—now patriots, martyrs, confessors, apostles!

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN MADAME COSMOGUNIA AND A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRER OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

JANUARY 1, 1793.

E. I REJOICE, my good madam, to see you. You bear your years extremely well. You really look as fresh and blooming this morning as if you were but just out of your leading-strings; and yet you have—I forget how many centuries upon your shoulders.

C. Do not you know, son, that people of my standing are by no means fond of being too nicely questioned about their years? Besides, my age is a point by no means agreed upon.

E. I thought it was set down in the church register?

C. That is true; but every body does not go by your register. The people who live eastward of us, and have sold tea time out of mind, by the great wall, say I am older by a vast deal; and that long before the time when your people pretend I was born, I had near as much wisdom and learning as I have now.

E. I do not know how that matter might be; one thing I am certain of, that you did not know your *letters* then; and every body knows that these tea-dealers, who are very vain, and want to go higher than any body else for the antiquity of their family, are noted for lying.

C. On the other hand, old *Isaac*, the great chronicler, who was so famous for casting a figure, used to say that the register itself had been altered, and that he could prove I was much younger than you have usually reckoned me to be. It may be so :—for my part, I cannot be supposed to remember so far back. I could not write in my early youth, and it was a long time before I had a pocket-almanack to set down all occurrences in, and the ages of my children, as I do now.

E. Well ; your exact age is not so material ;—but there is one point which I confess I wish much to ascertain. I have often heard it asserted, that as you increase in years, you grow wiser and better ; and that you are at this moment, more candid, more liberal, a better manager of your affairs, and, in short, more amiable in every respect, than ever you were in the whole course of your life ; and others,—you will excuse me, madam,—pretend that you are almost in your dotage ; that you grow more intolerable every year you live ; and that whereas in your childhood you were a sprightly innocent young creature, that rose with the lark, lay down with the lamb, and thought or said no harm of any one ; you are become suspicious, selfish, interested, fond of nothing but indulging your appetites, and continually setting your own children together by the ears for straws. Now I should like to know where the truth lies ?

C. As to that, I am, perhaps, too nearly concerned to answer you properly. I will, therefore, only observe, that I do not remember the time when I have not heard exactly the same contradictory assertions.

E. I believe the best way to determine the question will be by facts. Pray be so good as to tell me how you have

employed yourself in the different periods of your life; from the earliest time you can remember, for instance?

C. I have a very confused remembrance of living in a pleasant garden full of fruit, and of being turned out because I had not minded the injunctions that were laid upon me. After that, I became so very naughty, that I got a severe ducking, and was in great danger of being drowned.

E. A hopeful beginning, I must allow! Pray what was the first piece of work you recollect being engaged in?

C. I remember setting myself to build a prodigious high house of cards, which I childishly thought I could raise up to the very skies. I piled them up very high, and at last left off in the middle, and had my tongue slit for being so self-conceited. Afterwards I baked dirt in the sun, and resolved to make something very magnificent, I hardly knew what; so I built a great many mounds in the form of sugar-loaves, very broad at bottom and pointed at top:—they took me a great many years to make, and were fit for no earthly purpose when they were done. They are still to be seen, if you choose to take the trouble of going so far. Travellers call them my *folly*.

E. Pray what studies took your attention when you first began to learn?

C. At first I amused myself, as all children do, with pictures; and drew, or rather attempted to draw, figures of lions and serpents, and men with the heads of animals, and women with fishes' tails; to all which I affixed a meaning, often whimsical enough. Many of these my first scratches are still to be seen upon old walls and stones, and have greatly exercised the ingenuity of the curious to find out what I could possibly mean by them. Afterwards, when I had learned to read, I was wonderfully

entertained with stories of giants, griffins, and mermaids; and men and women turned into trees, and horses that spoke, and of an old man that used to eat up his children, till his wife deceived him by giving him a stone to eat instead of one of them; and of a conjurer that tied up the wind in bags, and——

E. Hold, hold, my good madam! you have given me a very sufficient proof of that propensity to the marvellous which I have always remarked in you. I suppose, however, you soon grew too old for such nursery stories as these.

C. On the contrary, I amused myself with putting them into verse, and had them sung to me on holidays; and, at this very day, I make a point of teaching them to all my children in whose education I take any pains.

E. I think I should rather whip them for employing their time so idly; I hope at least these pretty stories kept you out of mischief?

C. I cannot say they did; I never was without a scratched face, or a bloody nose, at any period I can remember.

E. Very promising dispositions, truly!

C. My amusements were not all so mischievous. I was very fond of star-gazing, and telling fortunes, and trying a thousand tricks for good luck, many of which have made such an impression on my mind, that I remember them even to this day.

E. I hope, however, your reading was not all of the kind you have mentioned?

C. No. It was at some very famous races, which were held every four years for my diversion, and which I always made a point to be at, that a man once came upon the race-ground, and read a history-book aloud to the

whole company: there were, to be sure, a number of stories in it not greatly better than those I have been telling you; however, from that time, I began to take to more serious learning, and likewise to reckon and date all my accounts by these races, which, as I told you, I was very fond of.

E. I think you afterwards went to school, and learnt philosophy and mathematics?

C. I did so. I had a great many famous masters.

E. Were you a teachable scholar?

C. One of my masters used always to weep when he saw me; another used always to burst into a fit of laughter. I leave you to guess what they thought of me.

E. Pray what did you do when you were in middle age?—that is usually esteemed the most valuable part of life.

C. I somehow got shut up in a dark cell, where I took a long nap.

E. And after you waked——

C. I fell a-disputing with all my might.

E. What were the subjects that interested you so much?

C. Several.

E. Pray let us have a specimen?

C. Whether the light of Tabor was created or uncreated; whether *one* be a number; whether men should cross themselves with two fingers or with three; whether the creation was finished in six days, because it is the most perfect number; or whether six is the most perfect number, because the creation was finished in six days; whether two and one make three, or only one.

E. And pray what may be your opinion, of the last proposition, particularly?

C. I have by no means made up my mind about it; in another century, perhaps, I may be able to decide upon the point.

E. These debates of yours had one advantage, however; you could not possiby put yourself in a passion on such kind of subjects.

C. There you are very much mistaken. I was constantly in a passion upon one or other of them; and if my opponent did not agree with me, my constant practice was to knock him down, even if it were in the church. I have the happiness of being able to interest myself in the most indifferent questions, as soon as I am contradicted upon it. I can make a very good dispute out of the question, Whether the preference be due to blue or green, in the colour of a jockey's cap; and would desire no better cause of a quarrel than whether a person's name should be spelt with C or with K.

E. These constant disputes must have had a very bad effect on your younger children. How do you hope ever to have a quiet house?

C. And yet, I do assure you, there is no one point that I have laboured more than that important one of family harmony.

E. Indeed!

C. Yes; for the sake of that order and unanimity, which has always been dear to me, I have constantly insisted that all my children should sneeze and blow their noses at the same time, and in the same manner.

E. May I presume to ask the reason of this injunction?

C. Is it possible you do not see the extreme danger, as well as indecorum, of suffering every one to blow his nose his own way? Could you trust any one with the keys of

your offices, who sneezed to the right when other people sneezed to the left; or to the left when they sneezed to the right?

E. I confess I am rather dull in discerning the inconvenience that would ensue:—but pray have you been able to accomplish this desirable uniformity?

C. I acknowledge I have not: and indeed I have met with so much obstinate resistance to this my wise regulation, that, to tell you the truth, I am almost on the point of giving it up. You would hardly believe the perverseness my children have shown on the occasion; blowing their noses, locked up in their rooms, or in dark corners about the house, in every possible way; so that, in short, on pretence of colds, tender noses, or want of pocket-handkerchiefs, or one plea or another, I have been obliged to tolerate the uncomplying, very much against my will. However, I contrived to show my disapprobation, at least, of such scandalous irregularities, by never saying *God bless you*, if a person sneezes in the family contrary to established rule.

E. I am glad, at least, you are in this respect got a little nearer to common sense. As you seem to have been of so imperious a disposition, I hope you were not trusted with any mischievous weapon?

C. At first I used to fight with clubs and stones; afterwards with other weapons; but at length I contrived to get at gunpowder, and then I did glorious mischief.

E. Pray, had you never any body who taught you better?

C. Yes; several wise men, from time to time, attempted to mend my manners, and reform me, as they called it.

E. And how did you behave to them?

C. Some I hunted about; some I poisoned; some I contrived to have thrown into prison; some I made bonfires of; others I only laughed at. It was but the other day that one of them wanted to give me some hints for the better regulation of my family; upon which I pulled his house down: I was often, however, the better for the lesson, though the teacher had seldom the pleasure of seeing it.

E. I have heard it said, you are very partial to your children; that you pamper some, and starve others. Pray who are your favourites?

C. Generally those who do the most mischief.

E. Had you not once a great favourite called Louis, whom you used to style the immortal man?

C. I had so. I was continually repeating his name: I set up a great number of statues to him, and ordered that every one should pull off his hat to them as he went by.

E. And what is become of them now?

C. The other day in a fit of spleen, I kicked them all down again.

E. I think I have read, that you were once much under the influence of an old man with a high-crowned hat, and a bunch of keys by his side?

C. It is true. He used to frighten me by setting his arms a-kimbo, and swearing most terribly; besides which, he was always threatening to put me in a dark hole, if I did not do as he would have me. He has conjured many *pence* out of my pocket, I assure you; and he used to make me believe the strangest stories! But I have now pretty nearly done with him; he dares not speak so big as

he used to do; hardly a shoeblack will pull of his hat to him now; it is even as much as he can do to keep his own tight upon his head; nay, I have been assured that the next high wind will certainly blow it off.

E. You must doubtless have made great advances in the art of reasoning, from the various lights and experiments of modern times: pray what was the last philosophical study that engaged your attention?

C. One of the last was a system of quackery, called Animal Magnetism.

E. And what in theology?

C. A system of quackery, called Swedenborgianism.

E. And pray what are you doing at this moment?

C. I am going to turn over quite a new leaf. I am singing *Ca Ira*.

E. I do not know whether you are going to turn over a new leaf or no; but I am sure, from this account, it is high time you should. All I can say is, that if I cannot mend you, I will endeavour to take care you do not spoil me; and one thing more, that I wish you would lay your commands on Miss Burney to write a new novel, and make you laugh.

LETTER OF JOHN BULL.*

SIR,

I HAVE long had the happiness of being married, as I have often said and sworn, to the best of all possible wives; but as this best of all possible wives has a few fancies, which I should be glad she were cured of, I have taken the liberty to lay my case before you.

My wife, sir, has been much admired in her time, and still is, in my eye, a very desirable woman. But you well know, sir, that let wives wear as well as you can suppose, they will be the worse for wear;—and so it is with my dame: and if I were to say that I can see in her neither spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, I should belie my own eyesight. I like her however, altogether, better than any woman I know; and we should jog on quietly enough together,—but that, of late, she has been pleased to insist upon my declaring, in all companies, that she is absolutely the handsomest woman under the sun; and that none of my neighbours' wives are fit to hold the candle to her: and there is one 'Squire Edmund, a hectoring bullying fellow, who, they say, is a little cracked (a great favourite with my wife, notwithstanding, ever since he has flattered and

* The following *jeu d'esprit* was written about the year 1792, and refers to the unqualified declarations of attachment to the constitution then promulgated by certain associations to prove their loyalty.

spoke her fair; for it is not long ago that he used to be drawing caricatures of her;)—he, I say, goes about everywhere, telling people I ought to challenge any one who presumes to assert to the contrary.—"*Cara sposa*," have I often said to her, "is it not sufficient if I *love* thee best, and that for the best reason, because thou art my wife? I chose thee freely, and am content to be 'to thy faults a little blind;' but to be entirely so, is neither good for thee nor for me."—She lately made me sign a paper, that she was, in all parts, of the exact proportions of the Venus de' Medici; though, Heaven knows! I never measured them together: and that not only there never was a more beautiful creature produced upon God's earth, but that it was utterly impossible for the imagination of man to conceive a more beautiful. I confess I was a good deal ashamed to make such boasts; nevertheless, I complied, for the sake of peace. My wife, moreover, entertains an idea, that every man who sees her is in love with her: and, like *Belise* in the *Femmes Sçavantes*, she is resolved not to give up the point, though the best compliments she has met with of late from her neighbours have been, "that she looks very well for a woman of her years; that she wears well, considering; that she has fine remains, and that one may easily see she has been a handsome woman in her time." These are speeches, one would think, not very apt to feed her vanity; yet, whenever she hears of a match that is likely to take place, she cannot help fancying the lover was attracted by some remote resemblance to her admired person. "Yes," she will cry on such occasions, "there was a tint of my complexion, which did the business; not so brilliant indeed—something of my majestic look—and an evident imitation of my walk." With

all this opinion of herself, my poor wife, especially of late, has been distractedly jealous of me. She is continually teasing me with embarrassing questions; as, "whether I love her as well as I did on my wedding-day; whether I will promise to love her if she should be blind, or decrepid, or out of her wits," &c.—A circumstance has occurred lately, which has increased this jealousy tenfold. My next-door neighbour, you must know, is married again; and ever since that event she watches me as a cat watches a mouse. I cannot look out of the window, or inquire which way the wind sets, but it is in order to admire my neighbour's new wife. She pretends to have found love-letters which have passed between us; and is sure, she says, I design to part with her, "false-hearted man as I am;" upon which, the other day, she threw herself into violent hysterics, and alarmed the whole family and neighbourhood.

To be sure the bride did send me a favour, which I wore in my hat, openly; and I do not deny but I may have paid her a few compliments, and written some verses upon her, for she is a showy, fine-spoken woman; but for all that, I would not marry her if I were free tomorrow; for, to tell you the truth, I suspect her to be too much of a termagant for me; and besides, John Bull is not given to change.

My wife has another failing, sir. She is fond of every thing that is old, because it *is* old; and she never will give any reason, except a woman's reason, which you know, is no reason at all, for any one thing she does. If I presume to hint things might be better after a different fashion, I can get no other answer than "that *it is her way*—that her grandmother and great-grandmother did so before her;

and that it is her maxim never to alter the family management." I can scarcely stir about my house, it is so filled with heavy lumbering furniture, half of which is worm-eaten, and of no use but to harbour vermin; but my wife cannot persuade herself to part with any of it, she has such a respect for a fine piece of antiquity; "and then," says she, "old furniture has such a *creditable* look!" "So it might, my dear," says I, "if it were all of a-piece; but, you know, we are continually buying new; and when one article does not suit with another, you must be sensible nothing can have a worse effect. For instance, now; this dismal old tapestry, how preposterous it looks along with the Indian matting and painted rout-chairs! I wish you would let it come down, it is fit for nothing but for the rats to play at hide-and-seek behind it."—"I would not have it down, my dear," says she, "for the world; it is the story of the Spanish Armada, and was done in the glorious days of Queen Bess." "Then give it a thorough cleaning, at least," returned I.—"If you offer to draw a nail," rejoined she, "there are so many private doors and secret passages made in the wall, you will be blinded with dust and mortar; and, for aught I know, pull an old house over your head." "Let me, at least, give a brushing to the beards of the old Dons," replied I.—"A stroke of the brush would shake them to pieces," insisted my wife; "they are as tender as a cobweb, I tell you, and I positively will not have them meddled with. Nobody, who has any regard for his ancestors, would think of pulling down a venerable set of hangings, made in the glorious days of Queen Elizabeth." Now I care little when a thing was made; the question is, what is it good for? and I know nothing so much useless lumber is good for, but to

oblige us to keep a great many supernumerary servants, at high wages, to look after it.

I have still another grievance, sir. If you are a married man, you may chance to know, that it is often as much as a man can do to manage his wife; but to manage one's wife and mother too is a task too hard for any mortal. Now, my mother, sir, lives with us, and I am sure I have always behaved myself as a dutiful and obedient son; her arm-chair is always set in the best place by the fire; she eats of the best, and drinks of the best; neither do I grudge it her, though the poor children's bellies are often pinched, while she is feasting upon nice bits. But with all this, I have much ado to keep her in good humour. If I stir about a little more briskly than ordinary, my mother has weak nerves, and the noise I make over her head will throw her into fits. If I offer but to dust the books in my study, my mother is afraid some of them should fall upon her head:—indeed, the old lady did get an unlucky blow with one or two of them, which has shaken her not a little. Besides which, she insists, and my wife stands by her in it, that I should consult her in all matters of business; and if I do not, I am cried out against as a graceless atheistical wretch; and a thousand idle reports are raised, that I am going to strip and turn my poor old mother out of doors. Then, my mother is rather particular in her dress; and the children sometimes will be tittering and making game, when she is displaying some of her old fallals; upon which my wife always insists I should whip them, which I used to do pretty severely, though of late, I confess, I have only hung the rod up over the chimney, *in terrorem*;—on such occasions, my wife never fails to observe, "how becoming it is in one of my mother's age to keep the same fashion

in her dress." This, by the way, is not true, for I remember my mother stuck all over with crosses and embroidery, to her very shoes, with strings of beads and such trumpery; yet she says, as well as my wife, that she never changes any thing.

I am, myself, Mr. Editor, an easy, peaceable, plain-spoken man as any that exists; and am a man of little or no expense for my own gratification: yet so it is, that what with the large establishment of servants which we are obliged to keep, and the continual drains upon my purse to supply my extravagant neighbours, I run out every year, and cannot help having many serious thoughts and melancholy forebodings where all this may end. But I apprehend, the first step ought to be for my wife and I to consult together, and make a reform in the family management wherever there may be occasion. If, therefore, you can persuade her to lay aside her groundless jealousies, and talk a little reason, I shall be highly obliged to you, and am your humble servant,

JOHN BULL.

LETTER ON WATERING-PLACES.

SIR,

I AM a country gentleman, and enjoy an estaste in Northamptonshire, which formerly enabled its possessors to assume some degree of consequence in the country; but which, for several generations, has been growing less, only because it has not grown bigger. I mean, that though I have not yet been obliged to mortgage my land, or fell my timber, its relative value is every day diminishing by the prodigious influx of wealth, real and artificial, which for some time past has been pouring into this kingdom. Hitherto, however, I have found my income equal to my wants. It has enabled me to inhabit a good house in town for four months in the year, and to reside amongst my tenants and neighbours for the remaining eight with credit and hospitality. I am indeed myself so fond of the country, and so averse in my nature to every thing of hurry and bustle, that, if I consulted only my own taste, I should never feel a wish to leave the shelter of my own oaks in the dreariest season of the year; but I looked upon our annual visit to London as a proper compliance with the gayer disposition of my wife, and the natural curiosity of the younger part of the family; besides, to say the truth, it had its advantages in avoiding a round of dinners and card-parties, which we must otherwise have engaged in for the winter season, or have been branded with the appellation of unsociable. Our journey gave me an opportunity

of furnishing my study with some new books and prints; and my wife of gratifying her neighbours with some ornamental trifles, before their value was sunk by becoming common, or of producing at her table or in her furniture some new-invented refinement of fashionable elegance. Our hall was the first that was lighted by an Argand lamp; and I still remember how we were gratified by the astonishment of our guests, when my wife with an audible voice called to the footman for the tongs to help to the asparagus with. We found it pleasant too to be enabled to talk of capital artists and favourite actors; and I made the better figure in my political debates from having heard the most popular speakers in the House.

Once too, to recruit my wife's spirits after a tedious confinement from a lying-in, we passed a season at Bath. In this manner, therefore, things went on very well in the main, till of late my family have discovered that we lead a very dull kind of life; and that it is impossible to exist with comfort, or indeed to enjoy a tolerable share of health, without spending good part of every summer at a Watering-place. I held out as long as I could. One may be allowed to resist the plans of dissipation, but the plea of health cannot decently be withstood.

It was soon discovered that my eldest daughter wanted bracing, and my wife had a bilious complaint, against which our family physician declared that sea-bathing would be particularly serviceable. Therefore, though it was my own private opinion that my daughter's nerves might have been as well braced by morning rides upon the Northamptonshire hills as by evening dances in the public rooms, and that my wife's bile would have been greatly lessened by compliance with her husband, I acquiesced; and pre-

parations were made for our journey. These indeed were but slight, for the chief gratification proposed in this scheme was, an entire freedom from care and form. We should find every thing requisite in our lodgings; it was of no consequence whether the rooms we should occupy for a few months in the summer were elegant or not; the simplicity of a country life would be the more enjoyed by the little shifts we should be put to; and all necessaries would be provided in our lodgings. It was not therefore till after we had taken them, that we discovered how far ready-furnished lodgings were from affording every article in the catalogue of necessaries. We did not indeed give them a very scrupulous examination; for the place was so full, that when we arrived, late at night, and tired with our journey, all the beds at the inn were taken up, and an easy-chair and a carpet were all the accommodations we could obtain for our repose. The next morning, therefore, we eagerly engaged the first lodgings we found vacant, and have ever since been disputing about the terms, which from the hurry were not sufficiently ascertained; and it is not even yet settled whether the little blue garret, which serves us as a powdering room, is ours of right or by favour. The want of all sorts of conveniences is a constant excuse for the want of all order and neatness, which is so visible in our apartment; and we are continually lamenting that we are obliged to buy things of which we have such plenty at home.

It is my misfortune that I can do nothing without all my little conveniencies about me; and in order to write a common letter I must have my study-table to lean my elbows on in sedentary luxury; you will judge therefore how little I am able to employ my leisure, when I tell you,

that the only room they have been able to allot for my use is so filled and crowded with my daughters' hat-boxes, band-boxes, wig-boxes, &c., that I can scarcely move about in it, and am at this moment writing upon a spare trunk for want of a table. I am therefore driven to saunter about with the rest of the party: but instead of the fine clumps of trees and waving fields of corn I have been accustomed to have before my eyes, I see nothing but a naked beach, almost without a tree, exposed by turns to the cutting eastern blast and the glare of a July sun, and covered with a sand equally painful to the eyes and to the feet. The ocean is indeed an object of unspeakable grandeur; but when it has been contemplated in a storm and in a calm, when we have seen the sun rise out of its bosom and the moon silver its extended surface, its variety is exhausted, and the eye begins to require the softer and more interesting scenes of cultivated nature. My family have indeed been persuaded several times to enjoy the sea still more, by engaging in a little sailing-party; but as, unfortunately, Northamptonshire has not afforded them any opportunity of becoming seasoned sailors, these parties of pleasure are always attended with the most dreadful sickness. This likewise I am told is very good for the constitution: it may be so for aught I know; but I confess I am apt to imagine that taking an emetic at home would be equally salutary, and I am sure it would be more decent. Nor can I help imagining that my youngest daughter's lover has been less assiduous since he has contemplated her in the indelicate situation of a ship-cabin. I have endeavoured to amuse myself with the company, but without much success; it consists of a very few great people, who make a set by themselves, and think they are entitled, by the free-

dom of a watering-place, to indulge themselves in all manner of *polissonneries*; and the rest is a motley group of sharpers, merchants' clerks, kept-mistresses, idle men, and nervous women. I have been accustomed to be nice in my choice of acquaintance, especially for my family; but the greater part of our connexions here are such as we should be ashamed to acknowledge anywhere else; and the few we have seen above ourselves will equally disclaim us when we meet in town next winter. As to the settled inhabitants of the place, all who do not get by us view us with dislike, because we raise the price of provisions; and those who do,—which in one way or other, comprehends all the lower class,—have lost every trace of rural simplicity, and are versed in all arts of low cunning and chicane. The spirit of greediness and rapacity is nowhere so conspicuous as in lodging-houses. At our seat in the country, our domestic concerns went on as by clock-work; a quarter of an hour in a week settled the bills, and few tradesmen wished, and none dared, to practise any imposition where all were known, and the consequence of their different behaviour must have been their being marked, for life, for encouragement or for distrust. But here the continual fluctuation of company takes away all regard to character: the most respectable and ancient families have no influence any further than as they scatter their ready cash; and neither gratitude nor respect are felt where there is no bond of mutual attachment besides the necessities of the present day. I should be happy if we had only to contend with this spirit during our present excursion, but the effect it has upon servants is most pernicious. Our family used to be remarkable for having its domestics grow grey in its service, but this expedition has al-

ready corrupted them; two we have this evening parted with, and the rest have learned so much of the tricks of their station, that we shall be obliged to discharge them as soon as we return home. In the country I had been accustomed to do good to the poor: there are charities here too;—we have joined in a subscription for a crazy poetess, a raffle for the support of a sharper, who passes under the title of a German count, and a benefit-play for a *gentleman* on board the hulks. Unfortunately, to balance these various expenses, this place, which happens to be a great resort of smugglers, affords daily opportunities of making *bargains*. We drink spoiled teas, under the idea of their being cheap; and the little room we have is made less by the reception of cargoes of India taffeties, shawl-muslins, and real chintzes. All my authority here would be exerted in vain; for (I do not know whether you know it or no) the buying of a bargain is a temptation which is not in the nature of any woman to resist. I am in hopes, however, the business may receive some little check from an incident which happened a little time since: an acquaintance of ours, returning from Margate, had his carriage seized by the Custom-house officers, on account of a piece of silk which one of his female cousins, without his knowledge, had stowed in it; and it was only released by its being proved that what she had bought with so much satisfaction as contraband, was in reality the home-bred manufacture of Spitalfields.

My family used to be remarkable for regularity in their attendance on public worship; but that too here is numbered amongst the amusements of the place. Lady Huntingdon has a chapel, which sometimes attracts us; and when nothing promises us any particular entertainment,

a tea-drinking at the Rooms, or a concert of what is called sacred music, is sufficient to draw us from a church where no one will remark either our absence or our presence. Thus we daily become more lax in our conduct, for want of the salutary restraint imposed upon us by the consciousness of being looked up to as an example by others.

In this manner, sir, has the season passed away. I spend a great deal of money, and make no figure; I am in the country, and see nothing of country simplicity or country occupations; I am in an obscure village, and yet cannot stir out without more observers than if I were walking in St. James' Park; I am cooped up in less room than my own dog-kennel, while my spacious halls are injured by standing empty; and I am paying for tasteless unripe fruit, while my own choice wall-fruit is rotting by bushels under the trees.—In recompense for all this, we have the satisfaction of knowing that we occupy the very rooms which my Lord —— had just quitted; of picking up anecdotes, true or false, of people in high life; and of seizing the ridicule of every character as they pass by us in the moving show-glass of the place,—a pastime which often affords us a good deal of mirth, but which, I confess, I can never join in without reflecting that what is our amusement is theirs likewise. As to the great ostensible object of our excursion,—health; I am afraid we cannot boast of much improvement. We have had a wet and cold summer; and these houses, which are either old tenements vamped up, or new ones slightly run up for the accommodation of bathers during the season, have more contrivances for letting in the cooling breezes than for keeping them out, a circumstance which I should presume sagacious physicians do not always attend to, when they

order patients from their own warm, compact, substantial houses, to take the air in country lodgings; of which the best apartments, during the winter, have only been inhabited by the rats, and where the poverty of the landlord prevents him from laying out more in repairs than will serve to give them a showy and attractive appearance. Be that as it may; the rooms we at present inhabit are so pervious to the breeze, that in spite of all the ingenious expedients, of listing doors, pasting paper on the inside of cupboards, laying sand-bags, puttying crevices, and condemning closet-doors; it has given me a severe touch of my old rheumatism; and all my family are in one way or other affected with it: my eldest daughter too has got cold with her bathing, though the sea water never gives any body cold!

In answer to these complaints, I am told by the good company here that I have stayed too long in the same air, and that now I ought to take a trip to the continent, and spend the winter at Nice, which would complete the business. I am entirely of their opinion, that it *would* complete the business, and have therefore taken the liberty of laying my case before you; and am, sir,

Yours, &c.

HENRY HOMELOVE.

ON EDUCATION.

The other day I paid a visit to a gentleman with whom, though greatly my superior in fortune, I have long been in habits of an easy intimacy. He rose in the world by honourable industry; and married, rather late in life, a lady to whom he had been long attached, and in whom centered the wealth of several expiring families. Their earnest wish for children was not immediately gratified. At length they were made happy by a son, who, from the moment he was born, engrossed all their care and attention.—My friend received me in his library, where I found him busied in turning over books of education, of which he had collected all that were worthy notice, from Xenophon to Locke, and from Locke to Catharine Macauley. As he knows I have been engaged in the business of instruction, he did me the honour to consult me on the subject of his researches, hoping, he said, that, out of all the systems before him, we should be able to form a plan equally complete and comprehensive; it being the determination of both himself and his lady to choose the best that could be had, and to spare neither pains nor expense in making their child all that was great and good. I gave him my thoughts with the utmost freedom, and after I returned home, threw upon paper the observations which had occurred to me.

The first thing to be considered, with respect to education, is the object of it. This appears to me to have been generally misunderstood. Education, in its largest sense, is a thing of great scope and extent. It includes the whole process by which a human being is formed to be what he is, in habits, principles, and cultivation of every kind. But of this, a very small part is in the power even of the parent himself; a smaller still can be directed by purchased tuition of any kind. You engage for your child masters and tutors at large salaries; and you do well, for they are competent to instruct him: they will give him the means, at least, of acquiring science and accomplishments; but in the business of education, properly so called, they can do little for you. Do you ask, then, what will educate your son? Your example will educate him; your conversation with your friends; the business he sees you transact; the likings and dislikings you express; these will educate him;—the society you live in will educate him; your domestics will educate him; above all, your rank and situation in life, your house, your table, your pleasure-grounds, your hounds and your stables will educate him. It is not in your power to withdraw him from the continual influence of these things, except you were to withdraw yourself from them also. You speak of *beginning* the education of your son. The moment he was able to form an idea his education was already begun; the education of circumstances—insensible education—which, like insensible perspiration, is of more constant and powerful effect, and of infinitely more consequence to the habit, than that which is direct and apparent. This education goes on at every instant of time; it goes on like time; you can neither stop it nor turn its course.

What these have a tendency to make your child, that he will be. Maxims and documents are good precisely till they are tried, and no longer; they will teach him to talk, and nothing more. The *circumstances* in which your son is placed will be even more prevalent than your example; and you have no right to expect him to become what you yourself are, but by the same means. You, that have toiled during youth, to set your son upon higher ground, and to enable him to begin where you left off, do not expect that son to be what you were,—diligent, modest, active, simple in his tastes, fertile in resources. You have put him under quite a different master. Poverty educated you; wealth will educate him. You cannot suppose the result will be the same. You must not even expect that he will be what you now are; for though relaxed perhaps from the severity of your frugal habits, you still derive advantage from having formed them; and, in your heart, you like plain dinners, and early hours, and old friends, whenever your fortune will permit you to enjoy them. But it will not be so with your son: his tastes will be formed by your present situation, and in no degree by your former one. But I take great care, you will say, to counteract these tendencies, and to bring him up in hardy and simple manners; I know their value, and am resolved that he shall acquire no other. Yes, you make him hardy; that is to say, you take a country-house in a good air, and make him run, well clothed and carefully attended, for, it may be, an hour in a clear frosty winter's day upon your gravelled terrace; or perhaps you take the puny shivering infant from his warm bed, and dip him in an icy cold bath, —and you think you have done great matters. And so you have; you have done all you can. But you were

suffered to run abroad half the day on a bleak heath, in weather fit and unfit, wading barefoot through dirty ponds, sometimes losing your way benighted, scrambling over hedges, climbing trees, in perils every hour both of life and limb. Your life was of very little consequence to any one; even your parents, encumbered with a numerous family, had little time to indulge the softnesses of affection, or the solicitude of anxiety; and to every one else it was of no consequence at all. It is not possible for you, it would not even be right for you, in your present situation, to pay no more attention to your child than was paid to you. In these mimic experiments of education, there is always something which distinguishes them from reality; some weak part left unfortified, for the arrows of misfortune to find their way into. Achilles was a young nobleman, *dios Achilleus*, and therefore, though he had Chiron for his tutor, there was one foot left undipped. You may throw by Rousseau; your parents practised without having read it; you may read, but imperious circumstances forbid you the practice of it.

You are sensible of the advantages of simplicity of diet; and you make a point of restricting that of your child to the plainest food, for you are resolved that he shall not be nice. But this plain food is of the choicest quality, prepared by your own cook; his fruit is ripened from your walls; his cloth, his glasses, all the accompaniments of the table, are such as are only met with in families of opulence: the very servants who attend him are neat, well dressed, and have a certain air of fashion. You may call this simplicity; but I say he will be nice,—for it is a kind of simplicity which only wealth can attain to, and which will subject him to be disgusted at all common tables.

Besides, he will from time to time partake of those delicacies which your table abounds with; you yourself will give him of them occasionally; you would be unkind if you did not: your servants, if good-natured, will do the same. Do you think you can keep the full stream of luxury running by his lips, and he not taste of it? Vain imagination!

I would not be understood to inveigh against wealth, or against the enjoyments of it; they are real enjoyments, and allied to many elegancies in manners and in taste;—I only wish to prevent unprofitable pains and inconsistent expectations.

You are sensible of the benefit of early rising; and you may, if you please, make it a point that your daughter shall retire with her governess, and your son with his tutor, at the hour when you are preparing to see company. But their sleep, in the first place, will not be so sweet and undisturbed amidst the rattle of carriages, and the glare of tapers glancing through the rooms, as that of the village child in his quiet cottage, protected by silence and darkness; and moreover, you may depend upon it, that as the coercive power of education is laid aside, they will in a few months slide into the habitudes of the rest of the family, whose hours are determined by their company and situation in life. You have, however, done good, as far as it goes; it is something gained, to defer pernicious habits, if we cannot prevent them.

There is nothing which has so little share in education as direct precept. To be convinced of this, we need only reflect that there is no one point we labour more to establish with children, than that of their speaking truth; and there is not any in which we succeed worse. And why?

Because children readily see we have an interest in it. Their speaking truth is used by us as an engine of government—"Tell me, my dear child, when you have broken any thing, and I will not be angry with you." "Thank you for nothing," says the child; "if I prevent you from finding it out, I am sure you will not be angry:" and nine times out of ten he can prevent it. He knows that, in the common intercourses of life, you tell a thousand falsehoods. But these are necessary lies on important occasions.

Your child is the best judge how much occasion he has to tell a lie: he may have as great occasion for it, as you have to conceal a bad piece of news from a sick friend, or to hide your vexation from an unwelcome visitor. That authority which extends its claims over every action, and even every thought, which insists upon an answer to every interrogation, however indiscreet or oppressive to the feelings, will, in young or old, produce falsehood; or, if in some few instances the deeply imbibed fear of future and unknown punishment should restrain from direct falsehood, it will produce a habit of dissimulation, which is still worse. The child, the slave, or the subject, who, on proper occasions may not say, "I do not choose to tell," will certainly, by the circumstances in which you place him, be driven to have recourse to deceit, even should he not be countenanced by your example.

I do not mean to assert, that sentiments inculcated in education have no influence;—they have much, though not the most: but it is the sentiments we let drop occasionally, the conversation they overhear when playing unnoticed in a corner of the room, which has an effect upon children; and not what is addressed directly to them in

the tone of exhortation. If you would know precisely the effect these set discourses have upon your child, be pleased to reflect upon that which a discourse from the pulpit, which you have reason to think merely professional, has upon you. Children have almost an intuitive discernment between the maxims you bring forward for their use, and those by which you direct your own conduct. Be as cunning as you will, they are always more cunning than you. Every child knows whom his father and mother love and see with pleasure, and whom they dislike; for whom they think themselves obliged to set out their best plate and china: whom they think it an honour to visit and upon whom they confer honour by admitting them to their company. "Respect nothing so much as virtue," says Eugenio to his son; "virtue and talents are the only grounds of distinction." The child presently has occasion to inquire why his father pulls off his hat to some people and not to others; he is told, that outward respect must be proportioned to different stations in life. This is a little difficult of comprehension: however, by dint of explanation, he gets over it tolerably well. But he sees his father's house in the bustle and hurry of preparation; common business laid aside, every body in movement, an unusual anxiety to please and to shine. Nobody is at leisure to receive his caresses or attend to his questions; his lessons are interrupted, his hours deranged. At length a guest arrives: it is my Lord ——, whom he has heard you speak of twenty times as one of the most worthless characters upon earth. Your child, Eugenio, has received a lesson of education. Resume, if you will, your systems of morality on the morrow, you will in vain attempt to eradicate it. "You expect company, mamma, must I be

dressed today?" "No, it is only good Mrs. Such-a-one." Your child has received a lesson of education, one which he well understands, and will long remember. You have sent your child to a public school; but to secure his morals against the vice which you too justly apprehend abounds there, you have given him a private tutor, a man of strict morals and religion. He may help him to prepare his tasks; but do you imagine it will be in his power to form his mind? His schoolfellows, the allowance you give him, the manners of the age and of the place, will do that; and not the lectures which he is obliged to hear. If these are different from what you yourself experienced, you must not be surprised to see him gradually recede from the principles, civil and religious, which you hold, and break off from your connexions, and adopt manners different from your own. This is remarkably exemplified amongst those of the Dissenters who have risen to wealth and consequence. I believe it would be difficult to find an instance of families, who for three generations have kept their carriage and continued Dissenters.

Education, it is often observed, is an expensive thing. It is so; but the paying for lessons is the smallest part of the cost. If you would go to the price of having your son a worthy man, you must be so yourself; your friends, your servants, your company must be all of that stamp. Suppose this to be the case, much is done: but there will remain circumstances which perhaps you cannot alter, that will still have their effect. Do you wish him to love simplicity? Would you be content to lay down your coach, to drop your title? Where is the parent who would do this to educate his son? You carry him to the workshops of artisans, and show him different machines and fabrics,

to awaken his ingenuity. The necessity of getting his bread would awaken it much more effectually. The single circumstance of having a fortune to get, or a fortune to spend, will probably operate more strongly upon his mind, not only than your precepts, but even than your example. You wish your child to be modest and unassuming; you are so, perhaps, yourself,—and you pay liberally a preceptor for giving him lessons of humility. You do not perceive, that the very circumstance of having a man of letters and accomplishments retained about his person, for his sole advantage, tends more forcibly to inspire him with an idea of self-consequence, than all the lessons he can give him to repress it. "Why do not you look sad, you rascal?" says the undertaker to his man in the play of The Funeral; "I give you I know not how much money for looking sad, and the more I give you, the gladder I think you are." So will it be with the wealthy heir. The lectures that are given him on condescension and affability, only prove to him upon how much higher ground he stands than those about him; and the very pains that are taken with his moral character will make him proud, by showing him how much he is the object of attention. You cannot help these things. Your servants, out of respect to you, will bear with his petulance; your company, out of respect to you, will forbear to check his impatience; and you yourself, if he is clever, will repeat his observations.

In the exploded doctrine of sympathies, you are directed, if you have cut your finger, to let that alone, and put your plaster upon the knife. This is very bad doctrine, I must confess, in philosophy; but very good in morals. Is a man luxurious, self-indulgent? do not apply your *physic*

of the soul to him, but cure his fortune. Is he haughty? cure his rank, his title. Is he vulgar? cure his company. Is he diffident or mean-spirited? cure his poverty, give him consequence—but these prescriptions go far beyond the family recipes of education.

What then is the result? In the first place, that we should contract our ideas of education, and expect no more from it than it is able to perform. It can give instruction. There will always be an essential difference between a human being cultivated and uncultivated. Education can provide proper instructors in the various arts and sciences, and portion out to the best advantage those precious hours of youth which never will return. It can likewise give, in a great degree, personal habits; and even if these should afterwards give way under the influence of contrary circumstances, your child will feel the good effects of them, for the later and the less will he go into what is wrong. Let us also be assured, that the business of education, properly so called, is not transferable. You may engage masters to instruct your child in this or the other accomplishment, but you must educate him yourself. You not only ought to do it, but you must do it, whether you intend it or no. As education is a thing necessary for all; for the poor and for the rich, for the illiterate as well as for the learned; Providence has not made it dependent upon systems uncertain, operose, and difficult of investigation. It is not necessary, with Rousseau or Madame Genlis, to devote to the education of one child the talents and the time of a number of grown men; to surround him with an artificial world; and to counteract, by maxims, the natural tendencies of the situation he is placed in in society. Every one has time to educate his child: the poor man

educates him while working in his cottage—the man of business while employed in his counting-house.

Do we see a father who is diligent in his profession, domestic in his habits, whose house is the resort of well-informed intelligent people—a mother whose time is usefully filled, whose attention to her duties secures esteem, and whose amiable manners attract affection? Do not be solicitous, respectable couple, about the moral education of your offspring! do not be uneasy because you cannot surround them with the apparatus of books and systems; or fancy you must retire from the world to devote yourselves to their improvement. In your world they are brought up much better than they could be under any plan of factitious education which you could provide for them: they will imbibe affection from your caresses; taste from your conversation; urbanity from the commerce of your society; and mutual love from your example. Do not regret that you are not rich enough to provide tutors and governors, to watch his steps with sedulous and servile anxiety, and furnish him with maxims it is morally impossible he should act upon when grown up. Do not you see how seldom this over culture produces its effect, and how many shining and excellent characters start up every day, from the bosom of obscurity, with scarcely any care at all?

Are children then to be neglected? Surely not: but having given them the instruction and accomplishments which their situation in life requires, let us reject superfluous solicitude, and trust that their characters will form themselves from the spontaneous influence of good examples, and circumstances which impel them to useful action.

But the education of your house, important as it is, is only a part of a more comprehensive system. Providence takes your child where you leave him. Providence continues his education upon a larger scale, and by a process which includes means far more efficacious. Has your son entered the world at eighteen, opinionated, haughty, rash, inclined to dissipation? Do not despair; he may yet be cured of these faults, if it pleases Heaven. There are remedies which you could not persuade yourself to use, if they were in your power, and which are specific in cases of this kind. How often do we see the presumptuous, giddy youth, changed into the wise counsellor, the considerate, steady friend! How often the thoughtless, gay girl, into the sober wife, the affectionate mother! Faded beauty, humbled self-consequence, disappointed ambition, loss of fortune,—this is the rough physic provided by Providence to meliorate the temper, to correct the offensive petulancies of youth, and bring out all the energies of the finished character. Afflictions soften the proud; difficulties push forward the ingenious; successful industry gives consequence and credit, and developes a thousand latent good qualities. There is no malady of the mind so inveterate, which this education of events is not calculated to cure, if life were long enough; and shall we not hope, that He, in whose hand are all the remedial processes of nature, will renew the discipline in another state, and finish the imperfect man?

States are educated as individuals—by circumstances: the prophet may cry aloud, and spare not; the philosopher may descant on morals; eloquence may exhaust itself in invective against the vices of the age: these vices will certainly follow certain states of poverty or riches, igno-

rance or high civilisation. But what these gentle alteratives fail of doing, may be accomplished by an unsuccessful war, a loss of trade, or any of those great calamities by which it pleases Providence to speak to a nation in such language as *will* be heard. If, as a nation, we would be cured of pride, it must be by mortification; if of luxury, by a national bankruptcy, perhaps; if of injustice, or the spirit of domination, by a loss of national consequence. In comparison of these strong remedies, a fast, or a sermon, are prescriptions of very little efficacy.

ON PREJUDICE.

It is to speculative people, fond of novel doctrines, and who, by accustoming themselves to make the most fundamental truths the subject of discussion, have divested their minds of that reverence which is generally felt for opinions and practices of long standing, that the world is ever to look for its improvement or reformation. But it is also these speculatists who introduce into it absurdities and errors, more gross than any which have been established by that common consent of numerous individuals, which opinions long acted upon must have required for their basis. For systems of the latter class must at least possess one property,—that of being practicable; and there is likewise a presumption that they are, or at least originally were, useful; whereas the opinions of the speculatist may turn out to be utterly incongruous and eccentric. The speculatist may invent machines which it is impossible to put in action, or which, when put in action, may possess the tremendous power of tearing up society by the roots. Like the chemist, he is not sure in the moment of projection whether he shall blow up his own dwelling and that of his neighbour, or whether he shall be rewarded with a discovery which will secure the health and prolong the existence of future generations. It becomes us, therefore, to examine with peculiar care those maxims which, under the appearance of following a closer train of

reasoning, militate against the usual practices or genuine feelings of mankind. No subject has been more canvassed than education. With regard to that important object there is a maxim avowed by many sensible people, which seems to me to deserve particular investigation. "Give your child," it is said, "no *prejudices*: let reason be the only foundation of his opinions; where he cannot reason, let him suspend his belief. Let your great care be, that as he grows up he has nothing to unlearn; and never make use of authority in matters of opinion, for authority is no test of truth." The maxim sounds well, and flatters perhaps the secret pride of man, in supposing him more the creature of reason than he really is; but, I suspect, on examination we shall find it exceedingly fallacious. We must first consider what a *prejudice* is. A prejudice is a sentiment in favour or disfavour of any person, practice, or opinion, previous to and independent of examining their merits by reason and investigation. Prejudice is prejudging; that is, judging previously to evidence. It is therefore sufficiently apparent, that no *philosophical belief* can be founded on mere prejudice; because it is the business of philosophy to go deep into the nature and properties of things: nor can it be allowable for those to indulge prejudice who aspire to lead the public opinion; those to whom the high office is appointed of sifting truth from error, of canvassing the claims of different systems, of exploding old and introducing new tenets. These must investigate with a kind of audacious boldness every subject that comes before them; these, neither impressed with awe for all that mankind have been taught to reverence, nor swayed by affection for whatever the sympathies of our nature incline us to love, must hold the balance with a

severe and steady hand, while they are weighing the doubtful scale of probabilities; and with a stoical apathy of mind, yield their assent to nothing but a preponderancy of evidence. But is this an office for a child? Is it an office for more than one or two men in a century? And is it desirable that a child should grow up without opinions to regulate his conduct, till he is able to form them fairly by the exercise of his own abilities? Such an exercise requires at least the sober period of matured reason: reason not only sharpened by argumentative discussion, but informed by experience. The most sprightly child can only possess the former; for let it be remembered, that though the reasoning powers put forth pretty early in life, the faculty of using them to effect does not come till much later. The first efforts of a child in reasoning resemble those quick and desultory motions by which he gains the play of his limbs; they show agility and grace, they are pleasing to look at, and necessary for the gradual acquirement of his bodily powers; but his joints must be knit into more firmness, and his movements regulated with more precision, before he is capable of useful labour and manly exertion. A reasoning child is not yet a reasonable being. There is great propriety in the legal phraseology which expresses maturity, not by having arrived at the possession of reason, but of that power, the late result of information, thought, and experience—discretion, which alone teaches, with regard to reason, its powers, its limits, and its use. This the child of the most sprightly parts cannot have; and therefore his attempts at reasoning, whatever acuteness they may show, and how much soever they may please a parent with the early promise of future excellence, are of no account whatever in the sober search after truth.

Besides, taking it for granted (which however is utterly impossible) that a youth could be brought up to the age of fifteen or sixteen without prejudice in favour of any opinions whatever, and that he is then set to examine for himself some important proposition,—how is he to set about it? Who is to recommend books to him? Who is to give him the previous information necessary to comprehend the question? Who is to tell him whether or no it is important? Whoever does these will infallibly lay a bias upon his mind according to the ideas he himself has received upon the subject. Let us suppose the point in debate was the preference between the Roman catholic and protestant modes of religion. Can a youth in a protestant country, born of protestant parents, with access, probably, to hardly a single controversial book on the Roman catholic side of the question,—can such a one study the subject without prejudice? His knowledge of history, if he has such knowledge, must, according to the books he has read, have already given him a prejudice on the one side or the other; so must the occasional conversation he has been witness to, the appellations he has heard used, the tone of voice with which he has heard the words monk or priest pronounced, and a thousand other evanescent circumstances. It is likewise to be observed, that every question of any weight and importance has numerous dependencies and points of connexion with other subjects, which make it impossible to enter upon the consideration of it without a great variety of previous knowledge. There is no object of investigation perfectly insulated;—we must not conceive therefore of a man's sittting down to it with a mind perfectly new and untutored: he must have passed more or less through a course of stu-

dies; and, according to the colour of those studies, his mind will have received a tincture,—that is, a prejudice.—But it is, in truth, the most absurd of all suppositions, that a human being can be educated, or even nourished and brought up, without imbibing numberless prejudices from every thing which passes around him. A child cannot learn the signification of words without receiving ideas along with them; he cannot be impressed with affection to his parents and those about him, without conceiving a predilection for their tastes, opinions and practices. He forms numberless associations of pain or pleasure, and every association begets a prejudice; he sees objects from a particular spot, and his views of things are contracted or extended according to his position in society: as no two individuals can have the same horizon, so neither can any two have the same associations; and different associations will produce different opinions, as necessarily as, by the laws of perspective, different distances will produce different appearances of visible objects. Let us confess a truth, humiliating perhaps to human pride;—a very small part only of the opinions of the coolest philosopher are the result of fair reasoning; the rest are formed by his education, his temperament, by the age in which he lives, by trains of thought directed to a particular track through some accidental association—in short, by *prejudice*. But why, after all, should we wish to bring up children without prejudices? A child has occasion to act, long before he can reason. Shall we leave him destitute of all the principles that should regulate his conduct, till he can discover them by the strength of his own genius? If it were possible that one whole generation could be brought up without prejudices, the world must return to the infancy

of knowledge, and all the beautiful fabric which has been built up by successive generations must be begun again from the very foundation. Your child has a claim to the advantage of your experience, which it would be cruel and unjust to deprive him of. Will any father say to his son, "My dear child, you are entering upon a world full of intricate and perplexed paths, in which many miss their way, to their final misery and ruin. Amidst many false systems, and much vain science, there is also some true knowledge; there is a right path: I believe I know it, for I have the advantage of years and experience, but I will instil no prejudices into your mind; I shall therefore leave you to find it out as you can; whether your abilities are great or small, you must take the chance of them. There are various systems in morals; I have examined and found some of a good, others of a bad tendency. There is such a thing as religion; many people think it the most important concern of life: perhaps I am one of them: perhaps I have chosen from amidst the various systems of belief,—many of which are extremely absurd, and some even pernicious,—that which I cherish as the guide of my life, my comfort in all my sorrows, and the foundation of my dearest hopes: but far be it from me to influence you in any manner to receive it; when you are grown up, you must read all the books upon these subjects which you can lay your hands on, for neither in the choice of these would I presume to prejudice your mind: converse with all who pretend to any opinions upon the subject; and whatever happens to be the result, you must abide by it. In the mean time, concerning these important objects you must keep your mind in a perfect equilibrium. It is true you want these principles more now than you can do at any

other period of your life; but I had rather you never had them at all, than that you should not come fairly by them." Should we commend the wisdom or the kindness of such a parent? The parent will perhaps plead in his behalf, that it is by no means his intention to leave the mind of his child in the uncultivated state I have supposed. As soon as his understanding begins to open, he means to discuss with him those propositions on which he wishes him to form an opinion. He will make him read the best books on the subject, and by free conversation and explaining the arguments on both sides, he does not doubt but the youth will soon be enabled to judge satisfactorily for himself. I have no objection to make against this mode of proceeding: as a mode of *instruction*, it is certainly a very good one: but he must know little of human nature, who thinks that after this process the youth will be really in a capacity of judging for himself, or that he is less under the dominion of prejudice than if he had received the same truths from the mere authority of his parent; for most assuredly the arguments on either side will not have been set before him with equal strength or with equal warmth. The persuasive tone, the glowing language, the triumphant retort, will all be reserved for the side on which the parent has formed his own conclusions. It cannot be otherwise; he cannot be convinced himself of what he thinks a truth without wishing to convey that conviction, nor without thinking all that can be urged on the other side weak and futile. He cannot in a matter of importance neutralize his feelings; perfect impartiality can be the result only of indifference. He does not perhaps seem to dictate, but he wishes gently to guide his pupil; and that wish is seldom disappointed. The child adopts the opinion of his parent,

and seems to himself to have adopted it from the decisions of his own judgement; but all these reasonings must be gone over again, and these opinions undergo a fiery ordeal, if ever he comes really to think and determine for himself.

The fact is, that no man, whatever his system may be, refrains from instilling prejudices into his child in any matter he has much at heart. Take a disciple of Rousseau, who contends that it would be very pernicious to give his son any ideas of a Deity till he is of an age to read Clarke or Leibnitz, and ask him if he waits so long to impress on his mind the sentiments of patriotism—the civic affection. O no! you will find his little heart is early taught to beat at the very name of liberty, and that, long before he is capable of forming a single political idea, he has entered with warmth into all the party sentiments and connexions of his parent. He learns to love and hate, to venerate or despise, by rote; and he soon acquires decided opinions, of the real ground of which he can know absolutely nothing. Are not ideas of female honour and decorum imprest first as prejudices; and would any parent wish they should be so much as canvassed till the most settled habits of propriety have rendered it safe to do it? In teaching first by prejudice that which is afterwards to be proved, we do but follow Nature. Instincts are the prejudices she gives us: we follow them implicitly, and they lead us right; but it is not till long afterwards that reason comes and justifies them. Why should we scruple to lead a child to right opinions in the same way by which Nature leads him to right practices!

Still it will be urged that man is a rational being, and therefore reason is the only true ground of belief, and

authority is not reason. This point requires a little discussion. That he who receives a truth upon authority has not a reasonable belief, is in one sense true, since he has not drawn it from the result of his own inquiries; but in another it is certainly false, since the authority itself may be to him the best of all reasons for believing it. There are few men who, from the exercise of the best powers of their minds, could derive so good a reason for believing a mathematical truth as the authority of Sir Isaac Newton. There are two principles deeply implanted in the mind of man, without which he could never attain knowledge,—curiosity, and credulity; the former to lead him to make discoveries himself, the latter to dispose him to receive knowledge from others. The credulity of a child to those who cherish him is in early life unbounded. This is one of the most useful instincts he has, and is in fact a precious advantage put into the hands of the parent for storing his mind with ideas of all kinds. Without this principle of assent he could never gain even the rudiments of knowledge. He receives it, it is true, in the shape of prejudice; but the prejudice itself is founded upon sound reasoning, and conclusive though imperfect experiment. He finds himself weak, helpless, and ignorant; he sees in his parent a being of knowledge and powers more than his utmost capacity can fathom; almost a god to him. He has often done him good, therefore he believes he loves him; he finds him capable of giving him information upon all the subjects he has applied to him about; his knowledge seems unbounded, and his information has led him right whenever he has had occasion to try it by actual experiment; the child does not draw out his little reasonings into a logical form, but this is to him a ground of

belief, that his parent knows every thing, and is infallible. Though the proposition is not exactly true, it is sufficiently so for him to act upon: and when he believes in his parent with implicit faith, he believes upon grounds as truly rational as when, in after life, he follows the deductions of his own reason.

But you will say, I wish my son may have nothing to unlearn, and therefore I would have him wait to form an opinion till he is able to do it on solid grounds. And why do you suppose he will have less to unlearn if he follows his own reason than if he followed yours? If he thinks, if he inquires, he will no doubt have a great deal to unlearn, whichever course you take with him; but it is better to have some things to unlearn, than to have nothing learnt. Do you hold your own opinions so loosely, so hesitatingly, as not to think them safer to abide by than the first results of his stammering reason? Are there no truths to learn so indubitable as to be without fear of their not approving themselves to his mature and well-directed judgement? Are there none you esteem so useful as to feel anxious that he be put in possession of them? We are solicitous not only to put our children in a capacity of acquiring their daily bread, but to bequeath to them riches which they may receive as an inheritance. Have you no mental wealth you wish to transmit, no stock of ideas he may begin with, instead of drawing them all from the labour of his own brain? If, moreover, your son should not adopt your prejudicies, he will certainly adopt those of other people; or, if on subjects of high interest he *could* be kept totally indifferent, the consequence would be, that he would conceive either that such matters were not worth the trouble of inquiry, or that nothing satisfactory was to

be learnt about them: for there are negative prejudices as well as positive.

Let parents, therefore, not scruple to use the power God and Nature have put into their hands for the advantage of their offspring. Let them not fear to impress them with prejudices for whatever is fair and honourable in action—whatever is useful and important in systematic truth. Let such prejudices be wrought into the very texture of the soul. Such truths let them appear to know by intuition. Let the child never remember the period when he did not know them. Instead of sending him to that cold and hesitating belief which is founded on the painful and uncertain consequences of late investigation, let his conviction of all the truths you deem important be mixed up with every warm affection of his nature, and identified with his most cherished recollections—the time will come soon enough when his confidence in you will have received a check. The growth of his own reason and the development of his powers will lead him with a sudden impetus to examine every thing, to canvass every thing, to suspect every thing. If he finds, as he certainly will find, the results of his reasoning different in some respects from those you have given him, far from being now disposed to receive your assertions as proofs, he will rather feel disinclined to any opinion you profess, and struggle to free himself from the net you have woven about him.

The calm repose of his mind is broken, the placid lake is become turbid, and reflects distorted and broken images of things: but be not you alarmed at the new workings of his thoughts,—it is the angel of reason which descends and troubles the waters. To endeavour to influence by authority would be as useless now as it was salutary before. Lie by in silence, and wait the result. Do not

expect the mind of your son is to resemble yours, as your figure is reflected by the image in the glass; he was formed, like you, to use his own judgement, and he claims the high privilege of his nature. His reason is mature, his mind must now form itself. Happy must you esteem yourself, if amidst all lesser differences of opinion, and the wreck of many of your favourite ideas, he still preserves those radical and primary truths which are essential to his happiness, and which different trains of thought and opposite modes of investigation will very often equally lead to.

Let it be well remembered that we have only been recommending those prejudices which go before reason, not those which are contrary to it. To endeavour to make children, or others over whom we have influence, receive systems which we do not believe, merely because it is convenient to ourselves that they should believe them, though a very fashionable practice, makes no part of the discipline we plead for. These are not prejudices, but impositions. We may also grant that nothing should be received as a prejudice which can be easily made the subject of experiment. A child may be allowed to find out for himself that boiling water will scald his fingers, and mustard bite his tongue; but he must be *prejudiced* against ratsbane, because the experiment would be too costly. In like manner it may do him good to have experienced that little instances of inattention or perverseness draw upon him the displeasure of his parent; but that profligacy is attended with loss of character, is a truth one would rather wish him to take upon trust.

There is no occasion to inculcate by prejudices those truths which it is of no importance for us to know till our powers are able to investigate them. Thus the meta-

physical questions of space and time, necessity and free-will, and a thousand others, may safely be left for that age which delights in such discussions. They have no connexion with conduct; and none have any business with them at all but those who are able by such studies to exercise and sharpen their mental powers: but it is not so with those truths on which our well-being depends; these must be taught to all, not only before they can reason upon them, but independently of the consideration whether they will ever be able to reason upon them as long as they live. What has hitherto been said relates only to instilling prejudices into *others;* how far a man is to allow them in himself, or, as a celebrated writer expresses it, to *cherish* them, is a different question, on which perhaps I may some time offer my thoughts.* In the mean time I cannot help concluding, that to reject the influence of prejudice in education is itself one of the most unreasonable of prejudices.

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* It is to be regretted that Mrs. Barbauld never fulfilled the intention here intimated.—EDITOR.

DIALOGUE IN THE SHADES.

Clio.—THERE is no help for it—they must go: The river Lethe is here at hand; I shall tear them off and throw them into the stream.

Mercury.—Illustrious daughter of Mnemosyne, Clio! the most respected of the Muses,—you seem disturbed. What is it that brings us the honour of a visit from you in these infernal regions?

Clio.—You are a god of expedients, Mercury; I want to consult you. I am oppressed with the continually increasing demands upon me: I have had more business for these last twenty years than I have often had for two centuries; and if I had, as old Homer says, "a throat of brass and adamantine lungs," I could never get through it. And what did he want this throat of brass for? for a paltry list of ships, canoes rather, which would be laughed at in the Admiralty Office of London. But I must inform you, Mercury, that my roll is so full, and I have so many applications which cannot in decency be refused, that I see no other way than striking off some hundreds of names in order to make room; and I am come to inform the shades of my determination.

Mercury.—I believe, Clio, you will do right: and as one end of your roll is a little mouldy, no doubt you will begin with that; but the ghosts will raise a great clamour.

Clio.—I expect no less; but necessity has no law. All the parchment in Pergamus is used up,—my roll is long enough to reach from earth to heaven; it is grown quite cumbrous; it takes a life, as mortals reckon lives, to unroll it.

Mercury.—Yet consider, Clio, how many of these have passed a restless life, and encountered all manner of dangers, and bled and died only to be placed upon your list,—and now to be struck off!

Clio.—And committed all manner of crimes, you might have added; but go they must. Besides, they have been sufficiently recompensed. Have they not been praised, and sung, and admired for some thousands of years? Let them give place to others: What! have they no conscience? no modesty? Would Xerxes, think you, have reason to complain, when his parading expeditions have already procured him above two thousand years of fame, though a Solyman or a Zingis Khan should fill up his place?

Mercury.—Surely you are not going to blot out Xerxes from your list of names?

Clio.—I do not say that I am: but that I keep him is more for the sake of his antagonists than his own. And yet their places might be well supplied by the Swiss heroes of Morgarten, or the brave though unsuccessful patriot Aloys Reding.—But pray what noise is that at the gate?

Mercury.—A number of the shades, who have received an intimation of your purpose, and are come to remonstrate against it.

Clio.—In the name of all the gods whom have we here?—Hercules, Theseus, Jason, Œdipus, Bacchus, Cadmus, with a bag of dragon's teeth, and a whole tribe of strange

shadowy figures! I shall expect to see the Centaurs and Lapithæ, or Perseus on his flying courser. Away with them; they belong to my sisters, not to me; Melpomene will receive them gladly.

Mercury.—You forget, Clio, that Bacchus conquered India.

Clio.—And had horns like Moses, as Vossius is pleased to say. No, Mercury, I will have nothing to do with these; if ever I received them, it was when I was young and credulous.—As I have said, let my sisters take them; or let them be celebrated in tales for children.

Mercury.—That will not do, Clio; children in this age read none but wise books: stories of giants and dragons are all written for grown-up children now.

Clio.—Be that as it may, I shall clear my hands of them and of a great many more, I do assure you.

Mercury.—I hope "the tale of Troy divine—!"

Clio.—Divine let it be, but my share in it is very small; I recollect furnishing the catalogue.—Mercury, I will tell you the truth. When I was young, my mother (as errant a gossip as ever breathed) related to me a great number of stories: and as in those days people could not read or write, I had no better authority for what I recorded: but after letters were found out, and now since the noble invention of printing,—why do you think, Mercury, any one would dare to tell lies in print?

Mercury.—Sometimes perhaps. I have seen a splendid victory in the gazette of one country dwindle into an honourable retreat in that of another.

Clio.—In newspapers, very possibly: but with regard to myself, when I have time to consider and lay things together, I assure you you may depend upon me.—Whom

have we in that group which I see indistinctly in a sort of twilight?

Mercury.—Very renowned personages; Ninus, Sesostris, Semiramis, Cheops who built the largest pyramid.

Clio.—If Cheops built the largest pyramid, people are welcome to inquire about him at the spot,—room must be made. As to Semiramis, tell her her place shall be filled up by an empress and a conqueror from the shores of the wintry Baltic.

Mercury.—The renowned Cyrus is approaching with a look of confidence, for he is introduced by a favourite of yours, the elegant Xenophon.

Clio.—Is that Cyrus? Pray desire him to take off that dress which Xenophon has given him; truly I took him for a Greek philosopher. I fancy queen Tomyris would scarcely recognize him.

Mercury.—Aspasia hopes, for the honour of her sex, that she shall continue to occupy a place among those you celebrate.

Clio.—Tell the mistress of Pericles we can spare her without inconvenience: many ladies are to be found in modern times who possess her eloquence and her talents, with the modesty of a vestal; and should a more perfect likeness be required, modern times may furnish that also.

Mercury.—Here are two figures who approach you with a very dignified air.

Solon and Lycurgus.—We present ourselves, divine Clio, with confidence. We have no fear that you should strike from your roll the lawgivers of Athens and Sparta.

Clio.—Most assuredly not. Yet I must inform you that a name higher than either of yours, and a constitution

more perfect, is to be found in a vast continent, of the very existence of which you had not the least suspicion.

Mercury.—I see approaching a person of a noble and spirited air, if he did not hold his head a little on one side as if his neck were awry.

Alexander.—Clio, I need not introduce myself; I am, as you well know, the son of Jupiter Ammon, and my arms have reached even to the remote shore of the Indus.

Clio.—Pray burn your genealogy; and for the rest, suffer me to inform you that the river Indus and the whole peninsula which you scarcely discovered, with sixty millions of inhabitants, is at this moment subject to the dominion of a few merchants in a remote island of the Northern Ocean, the very name of which never reached your ears.

Mercury.—Here is Empedocles, who threw himself into Etna merely to be placed upon your roll; and Calanus, who mounted his funeral pile before Alexander, from the same motive.

Clio.—They have been remembered long enough in all reason: their places may be supplied by the two next madmen who shall throw themselves under the wheels of the chariot of Jaggernaut,—fanatics are the growth of every age.

Mercury.—Here is a ghost preparing to address you with a very self-sufficient air: his robe is embroidered with flower-de-luces.

Louis XIV.—I am persuaded, Clio, you will recognize *the immortal man.* I have always been a friend and patron of the Muses; my actions are well known; all Europe has resounded with my name,—the terror of other countries, the glory of my own: I am well assured you are not going to strike me off.

Clio.—To strike you off? certainly not; but to place you many degrees lower in the list; to reduce you from a sun, your favourite emblem, to a star in the galaxy. My sisters have certainly been partial to you: you bought their favour with—how many livres a year? not much more than a London bookseller will give for a quarto poem. But me you cannot bribe.

Lewis.—But, Clio, you have yourself recorded my exploits;—the passage of the Rhine, Namur, Flanders, Franche Comté.

Clio.—O Lewis, if you could but guess the extent of the present French empire;—but no, it could never enter into your imagination.

Lewis.—I rejoice at what you say; I rejoice that my posterity have followed my steps, and improved upon my glory.

Clio.—Your posterity have had nothing to do with it.

Lewis.—Remember too the urbanity of my character, how hospitably I received the unfortunate James of England,—England, the natural enemy of France.

Clio.—Your hospitality has been well returned. Your descendants, driven from their thrones, are at this moment supported by the bounty of the nation and king of England.

Lewis.—O Clio, what is it that you tell me! let me hide my diminished head in the deepest umbrage of the grove; let me seek out my dear Maintenon, and tell my beads with her till I forget that I have been either praised or feared.

Clio.—Comfort yourself, however; your name, like the red letter which marks the holiday, though insignificant in itself, shall still enjoy the honour of designating the age of taste and literature.

Mercury.—Here is a whole crowd coming, Clio, I can scarcely keep them off with my wand: they have all got notice of your intentions, and the infernal regions are quite in an uproar,—what is to be done?

Clio.—I cannot tell; the numbers distract me: to examine their pretensions one by one is impossible; I must strike off half of them at a venture: the rest must make room,—they must crowd, they must fall into the back-ground; and where I used to write a name all in capitals with letters of gold illuminated, I must put it in *small pica*. I do assure you, Mercury, I cannot stand the fatigue I undergo, much longer. I am not provided, as you very well know, with either chariot or wings, and I am expected to be in all parts of the globe at once. In the good old times my business lay almost entirely between the Hellespont and the Pillars of Hercules, with sometimes an excursion to the mouths (then seven) of the Nile, or the banks of the Euphrates. But now I am required to be in a hundred places at once; I am called from Jena to Austerlitz, from Cape Trafalgar to Aboukir, and from the Thames to the Ganges and Burampooter; besides a whole continent, a world by itself, fresh and vigorous, which I foresee will find me abundance of employment.

Mercury.—Truly I believe so; I am afraid the old leaven is working in the new world.

Clio.—I am puzzled at this moment how to give the account, which always is expected of me, of the august sovereigns of Europe.

Mercury.—How so?

Clio.—I do not know where to find them; they are most of them upon their *travels*.

Mercury.—You must have been very much employed in the French revolution.

Clio.—Continually; the actors in the scene succeeded one another with such rapidity, that the hero of today was forgotten on the morrow. Necker, Mirabeau, Dumourier, La Fayette, appeared successively like pictures in a magic lanthern—shown for a moment and then withdrawn: and now the space is filled by one tremendous gigantic figure, that throws his broad shadow over half the globe.

Mercury.—The ambition of Napoleon has indeed procured you much employment.

Clio.—Employment! There is not a goddess so harrassed as I am; my sisters lead quite idle lives in comparison. Melpomene has in a manner slept through the last half-century, except when now and then she dictated to a certain favourite nymph. Urania, indeed, has employed herself with Herschel in counting the stars; but her task is less than mine. Here am I expected to calculate how many hundred thousands of rational beings cut one another's throats at Austerlitz, and to take the tale of two hundred and thirteen thousand human bodies and ninety-five thousand horses, that lie stiff, frozen and unburied on the banks of the Berecina;—and do you think, Mercury, this can be a pleasant employment?

Mercury.—I have had a great increase of employment myself lately, on account of the multitude of shades I have been obliged to convey; and poor old Charon is almost laid up with the rheumatism: we used to have a holiday comparatively during the winter months; but of late, winter and summer I have observed are much alike to heroes.

Clio.—I wish to Jupiter I could resign my office! Son of Maia, I declare to you I am sick of the horrors I record; I am sick of mankind. For above these three thousand years have I been warning them and reading lessons to

them, and they will not mend: Robespierre was as cruel as Sylla, and Napoleon has no more moderation than Pyrrhus. The human frame, of curious texture, delicately formed, feeling, and irritable by the least annoyance, with face erect and and animated with Promethean fire, they wound, they lacerate, they mutilate with most perverted ingenuity.—I will go and record the actions of the tigers of Africa; in them such fierceness is natural—Nay, the human race will be exterminated if this work of destruction goes on much longer.

Mercury.—With regard to that matter, Clio, I can set your heart at rest. A great philosopher has lately discovered that the world is in imminent danger of being over-peopled, and that if twenty or forty thousand men could not be persuaded every now and then to stand and be shot at, we should be forced to eat one another. This discovery has had a wonderful effect in quieting tender consciences. The calculation is very simple, any schoolboy will explain it to you.

Clio.—O what a number of fertile plains and green savannahs, and tracts covered with trees of beautiful foliage, have never yet been pressed by human footsteps! My friend Swift's project of eating children was not so cruel as these bloody and lavish sacrifices to Mars, the most savage of all the gods.

Mercury.—You forget yourself, Clio; Mars is not worshipped now in Christian Europe.

Clio.—By Jupiter but he is! Have I not seen the bloody and torn banners, with martial music and military procession, brought into the temple,—and whose temple, thinkest thou? and to whom have thanks been given on both sides, amidst smoking towns and wasted fields, after

the destruction of man and devastation of the fair face of nature!—And Mercury, god of wealth and frauds, you have your temple too, though your name is not inscribed there.

Mercury.—I am afraid men will always love wealth.

Clio.—O if I had to record only such pure names as a Washington or a Howard!

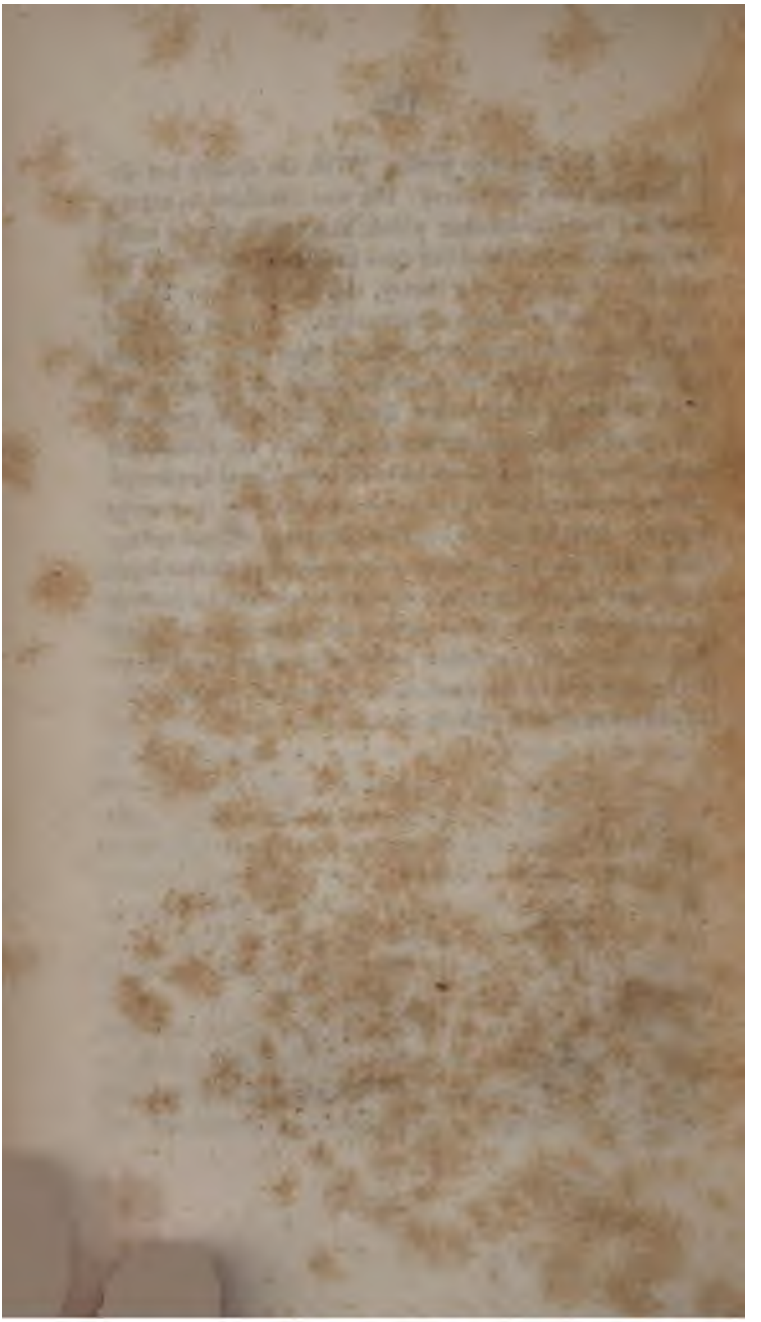
Mercury.—It would be very gratifying certainly; but then, Clio, you would have very little to do, and might almost as well burn your roll.

KNOWLEDGE AND HER DAUGHTER:

A FABLE.

KNOWLEDGE, the daughter of Jupiter, descended from the skies to visit man. She found him naked and helpless, living on the spontaneous fruits of the earth, and little superior to the ox that grazed beside him. She clothed and fed him; she built him palaces; she showed him the hidden riches of the earth, and pointed with her finger the course of the stars as they rose and set in the horizon. Man became rich with her gifts, and accomplished from her conversation. In process of time Knowledge became acquainted with the schools of the philosophers; and being much taken with their theories and their conversation, she married one of them. They had many beautiful and healthy children; but among the rest was a daughter of a different complexion from all the rest, whose name was Doubt. She grew up under many disadvantages; she had a great hesitation in her speech; a cast in her eye, which, however, was keen and piercing; and was subject to nervous tremblings. Her mother saw her with dislike: but her father, who was of the sect of the Pyrrhonists, cherished and taught her logic, in which she made a great progress. The Muse of History was much troubled with her intrusions: she would tear out whole leaves, and blot over many

pages of her favourite works. With the divines her depredations were still worse: she was forbidden to enter a church; notwithstanding which, she would slip in under the surplice, and spend her time in making mouths at the priest. If she got at a library, she destroyed or blotted over the most valuable manuscripts. A most undutiful child; she was never better pleased than when she could unexpectedly trip up her mother's heels, or expose a rent or an unseemly patch in her flowing and ample garment. With mathematicians she never meddled; but in all other systems of knowledge she intruded herself, and her breath diffused a mist over the page which often left it scarcely legible. Her mother at length said to her, "Thou art my child, and I know it is decreed that while I tread this earth thou must accompany my footsteps; but thou art mortal, I am immortal; and there will come a time when I shall be freed from thy intrusion, and shall pursue my glorious track from star to star, and from system to system, without impediment and without check."



REMARKS

ON

MR. GILBERT WAKEFIELD'S

ENQUIRY

INTO THE

EXPEDIENCY AND PROPRIETY

OF

PUBLIC OR SOCIAL WORSHIP.

.....in swarming cities vast
Assembled men, to the deep organ join
The loud resounding voice, oft breaking clear,
At solemn pauses, through the swelling base;
And, as each mingling flame increases each,
In one united ardour rise to heaven.

THOMPSON.

REMARKS

ON

MR. WAKEFIELD'S ENQUIRY.

THERE are some practices which have not been defended because they have never been attacked. Of this number is public or social worship. It has been recommended, urged, enforced, but never vindicated. Through worldliness, scepticism, indolence, dissatisfaction with the manner of conducting it, it has been often neglected; but it is a new thing to hear it condemned. The pious and the good have lamented its insufficiency to the reformation of the world, but they were yet to learn that it was unfriendly to it. Satisfied with silent and solitary desertion, those who did not concur in the homage paid by their fellow-citizens were content to acquiesce in its propriety, and had not hitherto assumed the dignity of a sect. A late pamphlet of Mr. Wakefield's has therefore excited the attention of the public, partly, no doubt, from the known abilities of the author, but still more from the novelty and strangeness of the doctrine. If intended as an apology, no publication can be more seasonable; but if meant as an exhortation, or rather a dehortation, it is a labour which many will think, from the complexion of the times and the tendencies of increasing habits, might well have been

spared. It is an awkward circumstance for the apostle of such a persuasion, that he will have many practical disciples whom he will hardly care to own; and that if he succeeds in making proselytes, he must take them from the more sober and orderly part of the community; and class them, as far as this circumstance affords a distinction, along with the uneducated, the profligate, and the unprincipled. The negative tenet he inculcates does not mark his converts with sufficient precision: their scrupulosity will be in danger of being confounded with the carelessness of their neighbours; and it will be always necessary to ask, Do you abstain because you are of this religion, or because you are of no religion at all?

It would be unfair, however, to endeavour to render Mr. Wakefield's opinions invidious; they, as well as every other opinion, must be submitted to the test of argument; and public worship, as well as every other practice, must stand on the basis of utility and good sense, or it must not stand at all: and in the latter case, it is immaterial whether it is left to moulder like the neglected ruin, or battered down like the formidable tower.

It will stand upon this basis, if it can be shown to be agreeable to our nature, sanctioned by universal practice, countenanced by revealed religion, and that its tendencies are favourable to the morals and manners of mankind.

What is public worship? Kneeling down together while prayers are said of a certain length and construction, and hearing discourses made to a sentence of Scripture called a text!—Such might be the definition of an unenlightened person, but such would certainly not be Mr. Wakefield's. The question ought to be agitated on much larger ground. If these practices are shown to be novel, it does not

follow that public worship is so, in that extensive sense which includes all modes and varieties of expression. To establish its antiquity, we must therefore investigate its nature.

Public worship is the public expression of homage to the Sovereign of the universe. It is that tribute from men united in families, in towns, in communities, which individually men owe to their Maker. Every nation has therefore found some organ by which to express this homage, some language, rite, or symbol, by which to make known their religious feelings; but this organ has not always, nor chiefly, been words. The killing an animal, the throwing a few grains of incense into the fire, the eating bread and drinking wine, are all in themselves indifferent actions, and have apparently little connexion with devotion; yet all of these have been used as worship, and are worship when used with that intention. The solemn sacrifices and anniversary festivals of the Jews, at which their capital and their temple were thronged with votaries from every distant part of the kingdom, were splendid expressions of their religious homage. Their worship, indeed, was interwoven with their whole civil constitution; and so, though in a subordinate degree, was that of the Greeks and Romans, and most of the states of antiquity. There has never existed a nation, at all civilized, which has not had some appointed form of supplication, some stated mode of signifying the dependence we are under to the Supreme Being, and as a nation imploring his protection. It is not pretended that these modes were all equally rational, equally edifying, equally proper for imitation, equally suitable for every state of society; they have varied according as a nation was more

or less advanced in refinement and decorum, more or less addicted to symbolical expression—to violent gesticulation —and more or less conversant with abstract ideas and metaphysical speculation. But whether the Deity is worshiped by strewing flowers and building tabernacles of verdure; by dances round the altar, and the shouts of a cheerful people; by offering the first-fruits of harvest, and partaking in the social feast; by tones of music, interpreted only by the heart; or by verbal expressions of gratitude and adoration—whether the hallelujahs of assembled multitudes rise together in solemn chorus; or whether they listen with composed and reverential attention to the voice of one man, appointed by them to be the organ of their feelings—whether a number of people meet together like the Quakers, and each in silence prefers his mental petition—wherever men together perform a stated act as an expression of homage to their Maker, there is the essence of public worship; and public worship has therefore this mark of being agreeable to the nature of man,—that it has been found agreeable to the sense of mankind in all ages and nations.

It is, indeed, difficult to imagine that beings, sensible of common wants and a common nature, should not join together in imploring common blessings; that, prone as men are in every other circumstance to associate together, and communicate the electric fire of correspondent feelings, they should act with unsocial reserve only where those interests are concerned which are confessedly the most important. Such is the temperament of man, that in every act and every event he anxiously looks around him to claim the gratulation or sympathy of his fellows. Religion, says Mr. Wakefield, is a personal thing: so is

marriage, so is the birth of a child, so is the loss of a beloved relative; yet on all these occasions we are strongly impelled to public solemnization. We neither laugh alone, nor weep alone,—why then should we pray alone? None of our feelings are of a more communicable nature than our religious ones. If devotion really exists in the heart of each individual, it is morally impossible it should exist there apart and single. So many separate tapers, burning so near each other, in the very nature of things must catch, and spread into one common flame. The reciprocal advantages, which public and private worship possess over each other, are sufficiently obvious to make both desirable. While the former is more animated, the latter comes more intimately home to our own circumstances and feelings, and allows our devotion to be more particular and appropriated. To most of the objections made against the one, the other is equally liable. Superstition can drop her solitary beads, as well as vociferate the repetition of a public collect: if symptoms of weariness and inattention may be observed in our churches, we have only to look into the diaries of the most pious Christians, and we shall find still heavier complaints of the dullness and deadness of their spiritual frame: the thoughts may wander in the closet when the door is shut: folly and selfishness will send up improper petitions from the cell as well as from the congregation: nay public worship has this great advantage,—that it teaches those to pray, who, not being accustomed to think, cannot of themselves pray with judgment. To all, it teaches that we are not to pray for exclusive advantages, but to consider ourselves as members of a community. Our inmost wishes learn restraint while our petitions are thus directed, and our desires by degrees

conform themselves to that spirit of moderation and justice, without which we cannot join in the comprehensive prayer, that must include the joint supplications of a numerous assembly. Public worship has this further advantage over private, that it is better secured against languor on one side, and enthusiasm on the other. If the devotional sentiment has not taken deep root in his mind, a man will scarcely keep up, in silence and in solitude, an intercourse to which he is prompted by no external appearance, and of which he is reminded by no circumstance of time or place. And if his sense of invisible things is strong enough to engage his mind in spite of these disadvantages, there is room to fear, lest, by brooding in silence over objects of such indistinct vastness, his bewildered ideas and exalted imagination should lead him to the reveries of mysticism; an extreme no less to be dreaded than that of indifference. When Mr. Wakefield, to strengthen his argument for seclusion in our religious exercises, directs our attention to the mount of Olives and the garden of Gethsemane, he should recollect that our Saviour sustained a character to which we cannot presume to aspire; and that, however favourable the desert and the wilderness have been to prophets visited by extraordinary illuminations, they cannot be equally suitable to the regular devotion of ordinary Christians. From the gloom of the cloister and the loneliness of the cell, have proceeded the most extravagant deviations from nature and from reason. Enthusiasm is indeed most dangerous in a crowd, but it seldom originates there. The mind, heated with intense thinking, adopts illusions to which it is not exposed when its devotion is guided and bounded by addresses which are intended to meet the common sentiments of a

numerous assembly. Religion then appears with the most benignant aspect, is then least likely to be mistaken, when the presence of our fellow-creatures points out its connection with the businesses of life and the duties of society. Solitary devotion, for worldly minds, is insufficient, for weak minds it is not profitable, for ardent minds it is not safe.

We must however do that justice to the author of the Enquiry, as to confess that he betrays no disposition to carry these exercises to any extreme. On the contrary, some of his expressions seem to strike at the root of all prayer, properly so called, as being the weak effort of an infirm and unphilosophical mind to alter the order of nature and the decrees of Providence, in which it rather becomes the wise man to acquiesce with a manly resignation. Without entering into a discussion, in which, perhaps, we might misrepresent his sentiments; as, in the greater part of his pamphlet, he has taken the ground of Scripture, which undoubtedly countenances the earnestness, and almost the importunity of petition; it may be sufficient for the present purpose to observe, that if there exists a man who, believing himself to be in the continual presence of Infinite Power, directed by infinite love and tender compassion to all his creatures—thinking often of this Being, and habitually referring every disposition of events to his providence—feeling himself more constantly and intimately connected with him than with all creation besides—can in every vicissitude of his life, in sickness and in sorrow, in imminent danger, anxious uncertainty, desertion or loss of friends, and all the trying circumstances of humanity that flesh is heir to; forbear, for himself or for those dearer to him than himself, to put up one

petition to the throne of God,—such a one may be allowed to strike out every petition in the Lord's Prayer but that comprehensive one, "thy will be done." If his faith be equally lively, his devotional feelings equally fervent, his sense of dependence upon God equally felt in his inmost soul, we dare not presume to censure the temperance of his religious addresses. We respect the subdued sobriety of his wishes, and we do not, we cannot suppose him deserted by the Supreme Being for that modest forbearance which proceeds from a resignation so absolute and complete. Others, however, whose philosophy is not of so firm a texture, may plead the example of him who prayed, though with meek submission, that the cup of bitterness might pass from him; and who, as the moment of separation approached, interceded for his friends and followers with all the anxiety of affectionate tenderness. But we will venture to say that practically there is no such philosophy.—If prayer were not enjoined for the perfection, it would be permitted to the weakness of our nature. We should be betrayed into it, if we thought it sin, and pious ejaculations would escape our lips, though we were obliged to preface them with, God forgive me for praying!

To those who press the objection, that we cannot see in what manner our prayers can be answered, consistently with the government of the world according to those general laws by which we find, in fact, that it is governed; it may be sufficient to say, that prayer, being made almost an instinct of our nature, it cannot be supposed but that, like all other instincts, it has its use; that no idea can be less philosophical than one which implies, that the existence of a God who governs the world, should make no difference in our conduct; and few things less probable

than that the child-like submission which bows to the will of a father, should be exactly similar in feature to the stubborn patience which bends under the yoke of necessity.

It may be further observed, that petitions for temporal advantages,—such, I mean, as a spirit of moderation will allow us to wish with sufficient ardour to make them the subject of our prayers,—are not liable to more objections than petitions for spiritual blessings. In either case the weak man does, and the wise man does not expect a miracle. That the arrogant, the worldly, and the licentious, should on a sudden, and without their own strenuous endeavours, be rendered humble, simple-minded, and pure of heart, would be as great a violation of the order of nature in the moral world, as it would be in the natural world that the harvest should ripen without the co-operation of the husbandman, and the slow influence of the seasons. Indeed, as temporal blessings are less in our power than dispositions, and are sometimes entirely out of it, it seems more reasonable of the two to pray for the former than for the latter; and it is remarkable that, in the model given us in the Lord's Prayer, there is not a single petition for any virtue or good disposition, but there is one for daily bread. Good dispositions, particularly a spirit of resignation, are declared and implied in the petitions, but they are not prayed for: events are prayed for, and circumstances out of our own power, relative to our spiritual concerns, are prayed for,—as, the not being led into temptation; but there is no prayer that we may be made holy, meek, or merciful. Nor is it an objection to praying for health, that sickness may possibly turn out a blessing, since it is no objection to the using all the means in our power to get rid of sickness, which we do as eagerly and as unre-

servedly as if we had not the least idea that it ever could be salutary. And we do right; for the advantages of sickness are casual and adventitious; but health is in itself, and in its natural tendencies, a blessing devoutly to be wished for. That no advantage of this nature ought to be prayed or wished for, unqualified with the deepest submission to the will of God, is an undoubted truth; and it is a truth likewise universally acknowledged by all rational Christians.

It cannot be denied, however, that great reserve is necessary in putting up specific petitions, especially of a public nature; but generally the fault lies in our engaging in wrong pursuits, rather than in imploring upon our pursuits the favour of heaven. Humanity is shocked to hear prayers for the success of an unjust war; but humanity and Heaven were then offended when the war was engaged in; for war is of a nature sufficiently serious to warrant our prayers to be preserved from the calamities of it, if we have not voluntarily exposed ourselves to them. The frivolous nature of most national contests appears strongly in this very circumstance, that petitions from either side have the air of a profanation; but if in some serious conjuncture our country was ready to be overwhelmed by an ambitious neighbour,—as that of the Dutch was in the time of Louis the Fourteenth,—in such a season of calamity, the sternest philosopher would give way to the instinctive dictates of nature, and implore the help which cometh from on high. The reason why both sides cannot pray with propriety, is because both sides cannot act with justice.

But supposing we were to discard all petition as the weak effort of infirm minds to alter the unbroken chain of

events; as the impatient breathings of craving and restless spirits, not broken into patient acquiescence with the eternal order of Providence—the noblest office of worship still remains:

> Praise is devotion fit for mighty minds,
> The jarring world's agreeing sacrifice.

And this is surely of a social nature. One class of religious duties separately considered, tends to depress the mind, filling it with ingenuous shame and wholesome sorrow; and to these humiliating feelings solitude might perhaps be found congenial: but the sentiments of admiration, love, and joy, swell the bosom with emotions which seek for fellowship and communication. The flame indeed may be kindled by silent musing; but when kindled it must infallibly spread. The devout heart, penetrated with large and affecting views of the immensity of the works of God, the harmony of his laws, and the extent of his beneficence, bursts into loud and vocal expressions of praise and adoration; and, from a full and overflowing sensibility, seeks to expand itself to the utmost limits of creation. The mind is forcibly carried out of itself, and, embracing the whole circle of animated existence, calls on all above, around, below, to help to bear the burden of its gratitude. Joy is too brilliant a thing to be confined within our own bosoms; it burnishes all nature, and with its vivid colouring gives a kind of factitious life to objects without sense or motion. There cannot be a more striking proof of the social tendency of these feelings, than the strong propensity we have to suppose auditors where there are none. When men are wanting, we address the animal creation; and, rather than have none to partake

our sentiments, we find sentiment in the music of the birds, the hum of insects, and the low of kine: nay, we call on rocks and streams and forests to witness and share our emotions. Hence the royal shepherd, sojourning in caves and solitary wastes, calls on the hills to rejoice and the floods to clap their hands; and the lonely poet, wandering in the deep recesses of uncultivated nature, finds a temple in every solemn grove, and swells his chorus of praise with the winds that bow the lofty cedars. And can he who, not satisfied with the wide range of existence, calls for the sympathy of the inanimate creation, refuse to worship with his fellow-men? Can he who bids "Nature attend," forget to "join every living soul" in the universal hymn? Shall we suppose companions in the stillness of deserts, and shall we overlook them amongst friends and townsmen? It cannot be! Social worship, for the devout heart, is not more a duty than it is a real want.

If public worship is thus found to be agreeable to the best impulses of our nature, the pious mind will rejoice to find it, at least, not discountenanced by revealed religion. But its friends, in endeavouring to prove this, must carry on the argument under some disadvantage, as Mr. Wakefield, though he lays great stress on the presumptive arguments which seem to favour the negative side of the question, will not allow the same force to those which may be urged on the other side. The practice of Christ, he tells us, is an authority to which all believers will bow the knee, a tribunal by which all our controversies must be awarded: yet he gives us notice at the same time, that to this authority, if brought against him, he will not bow the knee; and from this tribunal, if unfriendly to his cause, he will appeal; for that prayers and all external observances are

beggarly elements, to be laid aside in the present maturity of the Christian church; and that, even if social worship were an original appendage of the Gospel, the idea of a "progressive Christianity" would justify us in rejecting it. With this inequality of conditions, which it is sufficient just to notice, let us consider the array of texts which are drawn up against the practice in question; and particularly those precepts which, Mr. Wakefield says, are evidences that directly and literally prove public worship to be unauthorized by Christianity, and inconsistent with it, and which he distinguishes from those which condemn it merely by inference.

The first of these direct evidences is the injunction, not to worship as the hypocrites, who are fond of exhibiting in the most public places. "And when thou prayest, be not as the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men; verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret." But is it not evident, that the force of this precept is not aimed against public prayer, but against private prayer performed in public; against the ostentatious display which seeks to distinguish us from others, not the genuine sympathy which makes us desirous of blending our feelings with theirs? It was devotion obtruding itself in the face of business, amidst the show and bustle of the world. It did not seek for fellowship, but observation. It did not want the concurrence of men, but to be seen by them. Even in the synagogue it was silent, solitary, unsocial, and with sullen reserve and cold disdain kept itself aloof from communion, and invited only

applause. The Pharisee and the Publican both went up to the temple to worship, but they worshipped not together. Certainly the delicate and modest nature of sincere piety must shrink from an exhibition like this; and would not wish to have its feelings noticed, but where at the same time they may be shared. This text therefore seems to be only a caution respecting the proper performance of our closet duties.

"Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a spirit." True it is, the hour is come in which it is allowed by all rational believers, that the acceptableness of prayer does not depend on the sacredness of any particular place. The Jews wanted to be informed of this. They, naturally enough, were apt to consider their temple as the habitation of the Divine Being, in the same manner as a palace is the habitation of an earthly sovereign,—a place where men may come to make their court, and bring presents, and ask favours in return. These ideas have been done away by those more honourable notions of the Divine Being which our Saviour and good men after him have laboured to inculcate. We conceive of a church as of a building, not for God to reside, but for men to assemble in; for, though God is a spirit, men have bodies, and they cannot meet to do any thing without having some place to do it in. "Neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem," means therefore exclusively, with an idea of any peculiar sacredness, or

superstitious preference to any other structure which might be equally commodious.

With regard to the character of our Saviour himself, it is certain he did not always call upon his disciples to share that more intimate, and, if I may say so, confidential intercourse with his heavenly Father, which he may be supposed to have been favoured with; and it must be confessed, there is no formal mention made of any exercises of this kind either with them, or with the people at large. But his whole life was a prayer. He, who in his most familiar and convivial moments, was raising the thoughts of his hearers to God, and nourishing their piety by occasional instruction, could not be supposed to leave them disinclined to the intercourses of social piety. The beautiful commendatory prayer which he offered up when about to leave the world, though it was not entirely of the nature of social prayer, as his disciples did not join in it, yet, its being uttered in their presence, and their being the object of it, seems to place it nearly on the same ground. In the very miracle of the loaves, which Mr. Wakefield has produced as an instance of an incident which might have given rise to public prayer, and which was suffered to pass without it—in the account of this very miracle there is a direct precedent for the practice in question; for, looking up to heaven, "he blessed" before he break the bread. This, indeed, appears to have been his constant practice. It certainly does not belong to private devotion, and is a species of prayer more apt, perhaps, than any other, to degenerate into a mere form.

But if we do not find public worship, properly so called, in the life of our Saviour, it is because we look for it in the wrong place. It is not to be sought for in his in-

structions, either to the multitude at large, or to his disciples in their more private conversations. His public worship was paid where the rest of the Jews paid theirs—in the Temple. He came up, with the concourse of assembled multitudes, to the appointed religious festivals; he ate the passover, and associated with his fellow-citizens, even in those rites and that form of worship which he knew was so soon to be abolished.

Our Lord seems indeed to have been an early and regular frequenter of whatever public worship the Jews had among them. What this was, besides their sacrifices and ceremonial observances, Mr. Wakefield is infinitely better able than the author of these remarks, to collect from the volumes of Rabbinical learning; but, without going deeper into their antiquities than what may be gathered from those records of their history which are in the hands of every one, it may be seen that verbal addresses to the Divine Being often accompanied the public expressions of their thanksgiving. In their earliest times we have the song of Moses, in the burden of which the whole people, led by Miriam, joined in chorus. In a more polished age, the fine prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the Temple, a composition which has never been excelled, comes yet nearer to our ideas of an address to the Divine Being; and the whole people bore a part in the worship by the response, "for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever." A still more regular service is recorded by Nehemiah, when the people, after their return from the captivity, entered into that solemn renewal of their law described with so much affecting solemnity. They stood and confessed their sins, then they read the law; after which the Levites called upon them to stand up

and bless the Lord their God; they stood up accordingly, and joined in what I suppose the author of the Enquiry would call a pretty long prayer. And when Ezra blessed the Lord, the people answered, Amen, Amen. All this is sufficiently similar not only to the spirit, but to the very routine of our present modes of worship. If it be said, that these instances all arose from peculiar and striking occasions, it may be answered, that it is not likely any other would be recorded; and that the regularity and grace with which they seem to have been performed, indicate a people not unaccustomed to such exercises. Indeed the Psalms of David afford every variety which any of our prayers do; confession, ascription, thanksgiving, &c. These, it should seem, were many of them set to music, and sung with proper responses; for even in the Temple, the chief business of which was not prayer but sacrifice, the Levites and other singers, at the time of the morning and evening sacrifice, sung psalms of praise to God before the altar, and in the conclusion the priest blessed the people.* And it is not probable, that in a later period of their history, amidst a greater degree of refinement and cultivation, they should have contented themselves with mere ritual observances. This at least is evident, if in the time of our Saviour they had no worship similar to ours, he could not mean by any thing he said to hint a dislike of it; and if they had, he must have sanctioned the practice by conforming to it. But indeed it is acknowledged by most, and Mr. Wakefield seems to admit, that after their return from the Babylonish captivity, when their hearts were purified by adversity and more attached to their reli-

* See Prideaux's Connection, vol. ii. p. 528.

gion, they had regular and stated worship in their synagogues, consisting of forms of prayer, reading the Scriptures, and expounding. In the former, we are told, a minister, called from his office the angel or messenger of the church, officiated as the mouth of the congregation; but for the latter part of the service it was usual to call upon any stranger to take his share, who appeared to be sufficiently qualified to read and expound the lessons of the day. And hence probably it was, that our Saviour did not pray in the synagogues, though he often taught there, and interpreted the Scriptures.* Of their forms of prayer eighteen are given, held to be of high antiquity and peculiar sacredness; and these are in a strain not dissimilar to the Liturgies of more modern times. In short, if we trace the accounts given us both of the plan of the service, and of its presbyters, ministers, and deacons, it will be found, that the Christian church, in its corresponding officers, its collects, litanies, and expositions, is the legitimate daughter of the Jewish synagogue; and we shall be led to admire the singular fate of a nation, decreed to be at once imitated and despised.

Thus much may be sufficient to say upon a subject which, after all, is purely a question of historical curiosity.

To return to the character of our Saviour. His great business in the world was instruction; and this he dispensed, not in a systematic, but a popular manner; nor yet in a vague and declamatory style, but in a pointed and appropriated one; not where it would most shine, but where it was most wanted. He was the great reformer,

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* See Prideaux's Connection, vol. ii. p. 538.

the innovator of his day; and the strain of his energetic eloquence was strongly pointed against abuses of all kinds, and precisely those points of duty were most insisted on which he found most neglected. Almost all his discourses are levelled against some prevailing vice of the times, some fashionable worldly maxim, some artful gloss of a well known precept, some evasion of an acknowledged duty. They were delivered as occasion prompted, and therefore it was that they came so home to men's business and bosoms; for he might have delivered the most elaborate lectures on morality, and religion too, without offending the Scribes and Pharisees, if he had confined himself to system, and not attacked corruption. We shall therefore meet with continual disappointment if, in the few scattered discourses, most of them too conversations, which are preserved to us of our Saviour, we expect to find any thing like a regular code of laws, and still less a formulary of rules. He referred to known laws, and only endeavoured to restore the spirit of them, and to exalt the motive of obedience. The great duty of honouring our parents had probably not found a place in his instructions, but to expose the tradition which had made it of none effect. It is therefore a very inconclusive argument against a practice either, that we are not expressly enjoined it in the Gospel, or that the abuses of it are strongly dwelt upon; and this may serve for a general answer to Mr. Wakefield's objections built upon the animated denunciations against those who, for a pretence, make long prayers, and who cry, "Lord, Lord"—against vain repetitions—upon the exhortations to worship in spirit and in truth—the declaration that the Sabbath is made for man, and not man for the Sabbath—with a thousand others in the same strain, with

which the Gospel undoubtedly abounds. But is the utility of a practice destroyed by the abuse of it; or is it of none, because it is not of the chief value? Are none of our duties subordinate, yet real? or have they all the proud motto, *Aut Cæsar aut nullus.*—As to the idea of a "progressive Christianity," on which the author of the Enquiry lays so much stress, as no new revelation has been pretended subsequent to its original promulgation, it is difficult to conceive of any progress in it, distinct from the progress of reason and civilization in the different countries where it may be received. Now I do not know what right we have to suppose that the Jews in the time of our Saviour, were so gross in their ideas as to require a mode of worship which deserves to be stigmatized with the appellation of "beggarly elements and the twilight of superstition." They were probably as different from their countrymen in the time of the Judges, as we are from our ancestors of the Saxon heptarchy. They had long had among them most of those causes which tend to develop the mental powers. A system of laws and polity, writers of the most distinguished excellence, commercial and political intercourse with other nations; they had acute and subtle disputants, and an acquaintance with different sects of philosophy; and, under these circumstances, it is probable that most of those questions would be agitated which, at similar periods, have exercised and perplexed the human faculties. Be that as it may, Mr. Wakefield, by considering public worship as a practice to be adapted to the exigencies of the times, evidently abandons the textual ground, in which narrow path he seemed hitherto to have trod with such scrupulous precaution, and places it on the broader footing of utility. The utility of this practice therefore comes next to be considered.

It is an error, which is extremely incident to minds of a delicate and anxious sensibility, to suppose that practices do no good which do not all the good that might be expected from them. Let those who, in a desponding mood, are apt to think thus of public worship, calculate, if they can, what would be the consequence if it were laid aside. Perhaps it is not easy to estimate how much of the manners as well as the morals—how much of the cultivation as well as the religion of a people is derived from this very source. If a legislator or philosopher were to undertake the civilization of a horde of wild savages, scattered along the waste in the drear loneliness of individual existence, and averse to the faces of each other—if he had formed a plan to gather them together, and give them a principle of cohesion; he probably could not take a more effectual method than by persuading them to meet together in one place—at regular and stated times—and there to join together in a common act, imposing from its solemnity and endearing from the social nature of its exercises. If an adventurer were stranded on some foreign shore, and should find the inhabitants engaged in such an act, he might draw the conclusion, that the blessings of order, internal peace, mutual confidence, and a considerable degree of information, existed there, as surely as the philosopher drew a similar inference from the discovery of mathematical diagrams traced upon the sand. And thus, in fact, it was, that in the early beginnings of society, legislators called in the assistance of religious ideas, and with the charm and melody of solemn hymns, like those of Orpheus or of Linus, gathered round them the stupid, incurious barbarians, roused them to attention and softened into docility. Agreeably to this train of thinking, our

great dramatic moralist places the influences of social worship upon a par with the sacred touches of sympathetic sorrow, and the exhilarating pleasures of the hospitable board, and makes it one of the features which distinguish the urbanity of polished life from the rude and unfeeling ferocity which belongs to a clan of unprincipled banditti.

> If ever you have looked on better days,
> If ever been where bells have knolled to church,
> If ever sate at any good man's feast,
> If ever from your eye-lids wiped a tear,
> And known what 'tis to pity and be pitied;
> Let gentleness your strong enforcement be——

For, independent of the peculiar object of public religious assemblies, many collateral advantages are derived from them which the liberal thinker will by no means despise. The recurrence of appointed days of rest and leisure, which, but for this purpose, would never have been appointed, divides the weary months of labour and servitude with a separating line of a brighter colour. The church is a centre of union for neighbours, friends, and townsmen; and it is a reasonable and a pleasing ground of preference in our attachments, that we have "walked to the house of God in company." Even the common greetings that pass between those who meet there, are hallowed by the occasion of the meeting, and the spirit of civic urbanity is mingled with a still sweeter infusion of Christian courtesy. By the recurrence of this intercourse, feuds and animosities are composed, which interrupted the harmony of friends and acquaintance; and those who avoided to meet because they could not forgive, are led to forgive, being obliged to meet. Its effect in humanizing the lower orders of society, and fashioning their manners

to the order and decorum of civil life, is apparent to every reflecting mind. The poor who have not formed a habit of attending here, remain from week to week in their sordid cells, or issue thence to places of licentiousness more sordid; while those who assemble with the other inhabitants of the place, are brought into the frequent view of their superiors; their persons are known, their appearance noted; the inquiring eye of benevolence pursues them to their humble cottages, and they are not unfrequently led home from social worship to the social meal. If the rich and poor were but thus brought together regularly and universally, that single circumstance would be found sufficient to remove the squalidness of misery, and the bitterness of want; and poverty would exist only as a sober shade in the picture of life, on which the benevolent eye might rest with a degree of complacency when fatigued with the more gaudy colouring of luxury and show.

The good effect of public worship in this light is remarkably conspicuous in the Sunday schools. Many of the children who attend, have probably not very clearly comprehended any religious system; but the moving and acting under the public eye, together with a sense of duty and moral obligation, which, however obscure, always accompanies the exercises of religion, soon transforms them into a different kind of beings. They acquire a love of neatness and regularity; a sense of propriety insinuates itself into their young minds, and produces instead of the sullen and untamed licentiousness, which at once shuns and hates the restraints of better life, the modest deference and chastened demeanour of those who respect others because they respect themselves.

Public worship convers a great deal of instruction in an indirect manner. Even those didactic prayers which run out into the enumeration of the attributes of the Divine Being, and of the duties of a virtuous life, though, perhaps, not strictly proper as prayer, have their use in storing the minds of the generality with ideas on these important subjects; and the beauty and sublimity of many of these compositions must operate powerfully in lifting the heart to God, and inspiring it with a love of virtue. Improper as public prayers may have sometimes been, private prayers are likely to be still more so. Whatever contempt Mr. Wakefield may choose to throw on the official abilities of those who lead the service, it will not be denied that they are generally better informed than those who follow. Men to whom spiritual ideas are familiar from reading and study, do not sufficiently appreciate the advantage which the illiterate enjoy by the fellowship and communication of superior minds, who are qualified to lead their ideas in the right track.

Public worship is a means of invigorating faith. Though argument be one means of generating belief, and that on which all belief must ultimately rest, it is not the only means, nor, with many minds, the most efficacious. Practical faith is greatly assisted by joining in some act in which the presence and persuasion of others gives a sort of reality to our perception of invisible things. The metaphysical reasoner, entangled in the nets of sophistry, may involve himself in the intricacies of contradictory syllogisms till reason grows giddy, and scarcely able to hold the balance; but when he acts in presence of his fellow-creatures, his mind resumes its tone and vigour, and social devotion gives a colour and body to the deduc-

tions of his reason. Berkeley, probably, never doubted of the existence of the material world when he had quitted his closet. Some minds are not capable of that firmness of decision which embraces truth upon a bare preponderancy of argument—some, through a timorous and melancholy spirit, remain always in a perplexed and doubting state, if they rest merely on the conslusions built upon their own investigation. But every act in consequence of our faith, strengthens faith. These, when they enter a place of worship, amidst all the animating accompaniments of social homage, are seized with a happy contagion; slow hesitating doubts vanish in a moment, and give way to sincere and cordial feeling. These are not proofs, it is true; but they are helps, adapted to our nature, necessary to the generality, expedient for all. As for the multitude, so unaccustomed are they to any process of abstruse reasoning, and so much do they require the assistance of some object within the grasp of their senses, that it is to be doubted whether they could be at all persuaded of the existence of a spiritual invisible power, if that existence was not statedly acknowledged by some act which should impress the reality of it upon their minds, by connecting it with places, persons, and times.

Let it be observed, in the next place, that public worship is a civic meeting. The temple is the only place where human beings, of every rank and sex and age, meet together for one common purpose, and join together in one common act. Other meetings are either political, or formed for the purposes of splendour and amusement; from both which, in this country, the bulk of inhabitants are of necessity excluded. This is the only place, to enter which nothing more is necessary than to be of the

same species;—the only place where man meets man not only as an equal but a brother; and where, by contemplating his duties, he may become sensible of his rights. So high and haughty is the spirit of aristocracy, and such the increasing pride of the privileged classes, that it is to be feared, if men did not attend at the same place here, it would hardly be believed they were meant to go to the same place hereafter. It is of service to the cause of freedom therefore, no less than to that of virtue, that there is one place where the invidious distinctions of wealth and titles are not admitted; where all are equal, not by making the low, proud; but by making the great, humble. How many a man exists who possesses not the smallest property in this earth of which you call him lord; who, from the narrowing spirit of property, is circumscribed and hemmed in by the possessions of his more opulent neighbours, till there is scarcely an unoccupied spot of verdure on which he can set his foot to admire the beauties of nature, or barren mountain on which he can draw the fresh air without a trespass. The enjoyments of life are for others, the labours of it for him. He hears those of his class spoken of collectively, as of machines, which are to be kept in repair indeed, but of which the sole use is to raise the happiness of the higher orders. Where, but in the temples of religion, shall he learn that he is of the same species? He hears there (and were it for the first time, it would be with infinite astonishment) that all are considered as alike ignorant and to be instructed; all alike sinful and needing forgiveness; all alike bound by the same obligations, and animated by the same hopes. In the intercourses of the world the poor man is seen, but not noticed; he may be in the presence of his

superiors, but he cannot be in their company. In every other place it would be presumption in him to let his voice be heard along with theirs; here alone they are both raised together, and blended in the full chorus of praise. In every other place it would be an offence to be near them, without showing in his attitudes and deportment the conscious marks of inferiority; here only he sees the prostrations of the rich as low as his, and hears them both addressed together in the majestic simplicity of a language that knows no adulation. Here the poor man learns that, in spite of the distinctions of rank, and the apparent inferiority of his condition, all the true goods of life, all that men dare petition for when in the presence of their Maker—a sound mind, a healthful body, and daily bread,—lie within the scope of his own hopes and endeavours; and that in the large inheritance to come, his expectations are no less ample than theirs. He rises from his knees, and feels himself a man. He learns philosophy without its pride, and a spirit of liberty without its turbulence. Every time social worship is celebrated, it includes a virtual declaration of the rights of man.

It may be further observed, that the regular services of the church are to us the more necessary, as we have laid aside many of those modes and expressions which gave a tincture of religion to our social intercourse and domestic manners. The regard to particular days and seasons is nearly worn off. The forms of epistolary correspondence, and the friendly salutations which, in the last century, breathed a spirit of affectionate piety, are exchanged for the degrading ceremonial of unmeaning servility. The "God be with you," "God bless you," "If God permit," "Heaven have you in its keeping,"—like the graceful

Salam, or salutation of peace among the eastern nations, kept up in the mind a sense of the surrounding providence of the Divine Being, and might, in some measure, supersede the necessity of more formal addresses; whereas, in the present state of society, a stranger might pass day after day, and week after week, in the bosom of a Christian country, without suspecting the faith of its inhabitants (if public worship were laid aside) from any circumstance, unless it were the obscure, half-pronounced blessing which is still sometimes murmured over the table.

Let it therefore be considered, when the length and abstracted nature of our public prayers is objected to, that we have nothing to take their place. If our attention was excited by processions, garlands, altars, and sacrifices, and every action of our lives intermixed with some religious rite, these expressions of our homage might be more readily dispensed with; but in reality, tedious as Mr. Wakefield may think long prayers, they suit better with the gravity of the national disposition and the philosophic turn of our ideas, than any substitute which could be suggested by the most classic taste. Our prayers are become long, because our ceremonies are short.

If we may suppose these views of the subject to have established the general utility of public worship, a question still arises, Is the obligation to it universal? Is attendance on its exercises to be expected from those whose own minds are temples more hallowed than any they can enter; and whose knowledge and cultivation render it probable, that in every popular service they will meet with much to object to, and little to interest a taste rendered fastidious by critical accuracy and elegant refinement? Without presuming to condemn the conduct of

those who are in every respect so competent to form their own plans according to their own judgement, I would mention some considerations which, even to them, may present it in a light not unworthy their attention. It is, in the first place, an act of homage, and as such equally incumbent on all. It is a profession of faith, less dubious even than the performance of moral duties, which may proceed from a well directed prudence, or the harmony of a happy temperament. It is right and proper that Religion should have the honour of those who are calculated to do her honour. It is likewise useful for a pious man to be connected with pious people as such. Various associations are formed upon the ground of something which men wish to improve or to enjoy in common. Literary men associate, musical men associate, political men associate together; and as there is a great deal of the commerce of the world in which it would be impossible to introduce religion, there ought by way of balance to be some society of which that is the ground and principle; otherwise, from the very nature of our connexions with each other, we shall find religion less in our thoughts than almost any thing else in which we have an interest, and insensibly it will waste and die away for mere want of aliment. But the attendance of men of literature and knowledge is perhaps most important from its effect upon others. The unenlightened worship with most pleasure, where those worship whose opinions they respect. A religion that is left for the vulgar will not long satisfy even them. There is harshness in saying to the bulk of mankind, "Stand aside, we are wiser than you." There is harshness in saying, "Our affections cannot move in concert; what edifies you, disgusts us; we cannot feel in

common, even where we have a common interest." In the intercourses of life, the man of urbanity makes a thousand sacrifices to the conciliating spirit of courtesy, and the science of attentions. The exercises of devotion, Mr. Wakefield says, are wearisome. Suppose they were so; how many meetings do we frequent, to how many conversations do we listen with benevolent attention, where our own pleasure and our own improvement are not the objects to which our time is given up? He who knows much, must expect to be often present where he can learn nothing. While others are receiving information, he is practising a virtue. He, who in common life has learned to mix a regard to the feelings and opinions of others with the pursuit of his own gratifications, will bear, in the spirit of love and charity, the instruction which to him is unnecessary, the amplification which to him is tiresome, the deficiencies of method or of elocution, to which his ear and his judgement are acutely sensible; the imperfections, in short, of men or of societies inferior to himself in taste or knowledge;—as in conversation he bears with the communicative overflowings of self-importance, the repetition of the well known tale, and the recurrence of the numerous, burdensome forms of civilized society.

It becomes us well to consider what would be the consequence, if the desertion of men of superior sense should become general in our assemblies. Not the abolition of public worship,—it is a practice too deeply rooted in the very propensities of our nature; but this would be the consequence, that it would be thrown into the hands of professional men on the one hand, and of uninformed men on the other. By the one it would be corrupted; it would

be debased by the other. Let the friends of moderation and good sense consider whether it is desirable, whether it is even safe, to withdraw from the public the powerful influence of their taste, knowledge, and liberality. Let them consider whether they are prepared to take the consequences of trusting in the hands of any clergy, so powerful an engine as that of public worship and instruction, without the salutary check of their presence who are best able to distinguish truth from falsehood, to detect unwarrantable pretensions, and to keep within tolerable bounds the wanderings of fanaticism. Attentive to the signs of the times, they will have remarked, on the one hand, a disposition to give into deception, greater than might naturally have been presumed of this age, which we compliment with the epithet of enlightened. Empiric extravagancies have been adopted, which violate every sober and consistent idea of the laws of nature, and new sects have sprung up distinguished by the wildest reveries of visionary credulity. On the other, they will have observed indications of a desire to discourage the freedom of investigation, to thicken the veil of mystery, and to revive every obsolete pretension of priestly power, which, in the most ignorant periods, the haughtiest churchman has ever dared to assume. They will have read with astonishment an official exhortation to the inferior clergy—it was not fulminated from the Vatican, it was not dragged to light from the mould and rust of remote ages—It was delivered by an English divine of the eighteenth century, brilliant in parts and high in place: he knew it was to meet the notice and encounter the criticism of an enlightened and philosophic people, and he has not scrupled to tell them—that good works of a heretic are sin; and that such a one

may go to hell with his load of moral merit on his back. He has not scrupled to rank the first philosopher of this kingdom, and the man in it perhaps of all others most actively solicitous for the spread of what he at least believes to be genuine Christianity, with infidels and atheists; and thus by obvious inference has piously consigned him to the same doom. He has revived claims and opinions which have upon their heads whole centuries of oblivion and contempt; and by slandering Morality, has thought to exalt Religion.—Reflecting on these things, they will consider whether the man of judgement does not desert the post assigned him by Providence, when he withdraws from popular assemblies both the countenance of his example and the imposing awe of his presence; they will conceive themselves as invested with the high commission to take care *nequid respublica detrimenti capiat;* they will consider themselves as the salt of the earth, the leaven of the lump, not to be secluded in separate parcels, but to be mingled in the whole mass, diffusing through it their own spirit and savour.

The author of the Enquiry chooses to expatiate,—it is not difficult to do it,—on the discordant variety of the different modes of worship practised amongst men, and concludes it with characterizing this alarming schism by the comparison of the poet:

> One likes the pheasant's wing, and one the leg;
> The vulgar boil, the learned roast an egg.

But might we not venture to ask,—Where, pray, is the harm of all this? unless indeed I will not allow my neighbour to boil his egg because I roast mine. Eggs are good and nutritious food either way; and in the manner of

dressing them, fancy and taste, nay caprice, if you will, may fairly be consulted. If I prefer the leg of a pheasant, and my neighbour finds it dry, let each take what he likes. It would be a conclusion singularly absurd that eggs and pheasants were not to be eaten. All the harm is in having but one table for guests of every description; and yet even there, were I at a public ordinary, good in other respects, I would rather conform my taste in some measure to that of my neighbour, than be reduced to the melancholy necessity of eating my morsel by myself alone.

The dissenters cannot be supposed to pass over in silence Mr. Wakefield's strictures upon the manner in which they have chosen to conduct their public and social worship. They are surprised and sorry to find themselves treated with such a mixture of bitterness and levity by a man whose abilities they respect, and whom they have shown themselves ready to embrace as a brother. They have their prejudices, they acknowledge—and he perhaps has his. Many forms and observances may to them be dear and venerable, through the force of early habit and association, which to a stranger in their Israel may appear uncouth, unnecessary, or even marked with a shade of ridicule. They pity Mr. Wakefield's peculiar and insulated situation. Separating through the purest motives from one church, he has not found another with which he is inclined to associate; divided by difference of opinions from one class of Christians, and by dissonance of taste from another, he finds the transition too violent from the college to the conventicle; he worships alone because he stands alone; and is, naturally perhaps, led to undervalue that fellowship which has been lost to him between his

early predilections and his later opinions. If, however, the dissenters are not so happy as to gain his affection, they must be allowed to urge their claims upon his esteem. They wish him to reflect, that neither his classical knowledge, nor his critical acumen, nor his acknowledged talents, set him so high in the esteem of good men, as that integrity which he possesses in common with those whom he despises; they believe further consideration would suggest to him, that it were more candid to pass over those peculiarities which have originated in a delicate conscience and the fervour of devotion; and they cannot help asking, Whether they had reason to expect the severity of sarcastic ridicule from him, whose best praise it is that he has imitated their virtues and shared their sacrifices?

The dissenters, however, do not make it their boast that they have nothing to reform. They have, perhaps, always been more conspicuous for principle than for taste; their practices are founded upon a prevalence of religious fervour, an animation and warmth of piety, which, if it no longer exists, it is vain to simulate. But what they do make their boast is, that they acknowledge no principle which forbids them to reform; that they have no leave to ask of bishops, synods, or parliaments, in order to lay aside forms which have become vapid. They are open to conviction; they are ready to receive with thankfulness every sober and liberal remark which may assist them to improve their religious addresses, and model them to the temper of the public mind. But, with regard to those practices of superabundant devotion which have drawn down upon them the indignation of the critic, it is the opinion of those who best know the dissenters of the present day, that they might have been suffered to fall quietly

of themselves: they are supported by no authority, defrayed by no impost. If they make long prayers, it is at the expense only of their own breath and spirits; no widows' houses are devoured by it. If the present generation yawn and slumber over the exercises which their fathers attended with pious alacrity, the sons will of course learn to shorten them. If the disposition of their public services wants animation, as perhaps it does, the silent pews will be deserted one by one, and they will be obliged to seek some other mode of engaging the attention of their audience. But modes and forms affect not the essence of public worship; that may be performed with a form or without one; by words alone, or by symbolical expressions, combined with or separated from instruction; with or without the assistance of a particular order appointed to officiate in leading the devotions: it may be celebrated one day in seven, or in eight, or in ten: in many of these particulars a certain deference should be had to the sentiments of that society with which, upon the whole, we think it best to connect ourselves, and as times and manners change, these circumstances will vary; but the root of the practice is too strongly interwoven with the texture of the human frame ever to be abandoned. While man has wants, he will pray; while he is sensible of blessings, he will offer praise; while he has common wants and common blessings, he will pray and praise in company with his fellows; and while he feels himself a social being, he will not be persuaded to lay aside social worship.

It must, however, be acknowledged, that, in order to give public worship all the grace and efficacy of which it is susceptible, much alteration is necessary. It is necessary here, as in every other concern, that timely reformation

should prevent neglect. Much might be done by judgement, taste, and a devotional spirit united, to improve the plan of our religious assemblies. Should a genius arise amongst us qualified for such a task, and in circumstances favourable to his being listened to, he would probably remark first, on the construction of our churches, so ill adapted are a great part of them to the purposes either of hearing or feeling. He would reprobate those little gloomy solitary cells, planned by the spirit of aristocracy, which deform the building no less to the eye of taste than to the eye of benevolence, and insulating each family within its separate inclosure, favour at once the pride of rank and the laziness of indulgence. He might choose for these structures something of the amphitheatrical form, where the minister, on a raised platform, should be beheld with ease by the whole wave of people, at once bending together in deep humiliation, or spreading forth their hands in the earnestness of petition. It would certainly be found desirable that the people should themselves have a large share in the performance of the service, as the intermixture of their voices would both introduce more variety and greater animation; provided pains were taken by proper teaching to enable them to bear their part with a decorum and propriety, which, it must be confessed, we do not see at present amongst those whose public services possess the advantage of responses. The explaining, and teaching them to recite, such hymns and collects as it might be thought proper they should bear a part in, would form a pleasing and useful branch of the instruction of young people, and of the lower classes; it would give them an interest in the public service, and might fill up agreeably a vacant hour either on the Sunday or on some other leisure

day, especially if they were likewise regularly instructed in singing for the same purpose. As we have never seen, perhaps we can hardly conceive, the effect which the united voices of a whole congregation, all in the lively expression of one feeling, would have upon the mind. We should then perceive not only that we were doing the same thing in the same place, but that we were doing it with one accord. The deep silence of listening expectation, the burst of united praises, the solemn pauses that invite reflection, the varied tones of humiliation, gratitude or persuasion, would swell and melt the heart by turns; nor would there be any reason to guard against the wandering eye, when every object it rested on must forcibly recall it to the duties of the place.—Possibly it might be found expedient to separate worship from instruction; the learned teacher from the leader of the public devotions, in whom voice, and popular talents, might perhaps be allowed to supersede a more deep and critical acquaintance with the doctrines of theology. One consequence, at least, would follow such a separation, that instruction would be given more systematically.—Nothing that is taught at all is taught in so vague and desultory a manner as the doctrines of religion. A congregation may attend for years, even a good preacher, and never hear the evidences of either natural or revealed religion regularly explained to them: they may attend for years, and never hear a connected system of moral duties extending to the different situations and relations of life: they may attend for years, and not even gain any clear idea of the history and chronology of the Old and New Testament, which are read to them every Sunday. They will hear abundance of excellent doctrine, and will often feel their hearts

warmed and their minds edified; but their ideas upon these subjects will be confused and imperfect, because they are treated on in a manner so totally different from every thing else which bears the name of instruction. This is probably owing, in a great measure, to the custom of prefixing to every pulpit discourse a sentence, taken indiscriminately from any part of the Scriptures, under the name of a text, which at first implying an exposition, was afterwards used to suggest a subject, and is now, by degrees, dwindling into a motto.—Still, however, the custom subsists; and while it serves to supersede a more methodical course of instruction, tends to keep up in the minds of the generality of hearers a very superstitious idea,—not now entertained, it is to be presumed, by the generality of those who teach,—of the equal sacredness and importance of every part of so miscellaneous a collection.

If these insulated discourses, of which each is complete in itself, and therefore can have but little compass, were digested into a regular plan of lectures, supported by a course of reading, to which the audience might be directed, it would have the further advantage of rousing the inattentive and restraining the rambling hearer by the interest which would be created by such a connected series of information. They would occupy a larger space in the mind, they would more frequently be the subject of recollection and meditation; there would be a fear of missing one link in such a chain of truths, and the more intelligent part of a congregation might find a useful and interesting employment in assisting the teacher in the instruction of those who are not able to comprehend instruction with the same facility as themselves. When

such a course of instruction had been delivered, it would not be expected that discourses, into which men of genius and learning had digested their best thoughts, should be thrown by, or brought forward again, as it were, by stealth; but they would be regularly and avowedly repeated at proper intervals. It is usual upon the continent for a set of sermons to be delivered in several churches; each of which has its officiating minister for the stated public worship: and thus a whole district partakes the advantages of the labours of a man eminent for composition. Perhaps it might be desirable to join to religious information some instruction in the laws of our country, which are, or ought to be, founded upon morals; and which, by a strange solecism, are obligatory upon all, and scarcely promulgated, much less explained.—Many ideas will offer themselves to a thinking man, who wishes not to abolish, but to improve the public worship of his country. These are only hints, offered with diffidence and respect, to those who are able to judge of and carry them into effect.

Above all, it would be desirable to separate from religion that idea of gloom which in this country has but too generally accompanied it. The fact cannot be denied; the cause must be sought, partly in our national character, which I am afraid is not naturally either very cheerful or very social, and which we shall do well to meliorate by every possible attention to our habits of life;—and partly to the colour of our religious systems. No one who embraces the common idea of future torments, together with the doctrine of election and reprobation, the insufficiency of virtue to escape the wrath of God, and the strange absurdity which, it should seem, through similarity of sound

alone has been admitted as an axiom, that sins committed against an Infinite Being do therefore deserve infinite punishment—no one, I will venture to assert, can believe such tenets, and have them often in his thoughts, and yet be cheerful. Whence a system has arisen so incompatible with that justice and benevolence, which in the discourses of our Saviour are represented as the most essential attributes of the Divine Being, is not easy to trace. It is probable, however, that power, being the most prominent feature in our conceptions of the Creator, and that of which we see the most striking image here on earth (there being a greater portion of uncontrouled power than of unmixed wisdom or goodness to be found amongst human beings,) the Deity would naturally be likened to an absolute monarch;—and most absolute monarchs having been tyrants, jealous of their sovereignty, averse to freedom of investigation, ordering affairs, not with a view to the happiness of their subjects, but to the advancement of their own glory; not to be approached but with rich gifts and offerings; bestowing favours, not in proportion to merit, but from the pure influence of caprice and blind partiality; to those who have offended them severe, and unforgiving, except induced to pardon by the importunate intercession of some favourite: confining their enemies, when they had overcome them, after a contest, in deep, dark dungeons under ground, or putting them to death in the prolonged misery of excruciating tortures—these features of human depravity have been most faithfully transferred to the Supreme Being; and men have imaged to themselves how a Nero or a Domitian would have acted, if, from the extent of their dominion there had been no escape, and to the duration of it no period.

These ideas of the vulgar belief, terrible, but as yet vague and undefined, passed into the speculations of the schoolmen, by whom they were combined with the metaphysical idea of eternity, arranged in specific propositions, fixed in creeds, and elaborated into systems, till at length they have been sublimed into all the tremendous horrors of the Calvinistic faith. These doctrines, it is true, among thinking people, are loosing ground; but there is still apparent, in that class called serious Christians, a tenderness in exposing them; a sort of leaning towards them, as in walking over a precipice one should lean to the safest side; an idea that they are, if not true, at least good to be believed, and that a salutary error is better than a dangerous truth. But that error can neither be salutary nor harmless, which attributes to the Deity injustice and cruelty; and that religion must have the worst of tendencies, which renders it dangerous for man to imitate the being whom he worships. Let those who hold such tenets consider, that the invisible Creator has no name, and is identified only by his character; and they will tremble to think what being they are worshipping, when they invoke a power capable of producing existence, in order to continue it in never ending torments. The God of the Assembly's Catechism is not the same God with the deity of Thomson's Seasons, and of Hutcheson's Ethics. Unity of character in what we adore, is much more essential than unity of person. We often boast, and with reason, of the purity of our religion, as opposed to the grossness of the theology of the Greeks and Romans; but we should remember, that cruelty is as much worse than licentiousness, as a Moloch is worse than a satyr.—When will Christians permit themselves to believe that the same conduct which

gains them the approbation of good men here, will secure the favour of heaven hereafter? When will they cease making their court to their Maker by the same servile debasement and affectation of lowliness by which the vain potentates of the earth are flattered? When a harmless and well meaning man, in the exaggerated figures of theological rhetoric, calls himself the vilest of sinners, it is in precisely the same spirit of false humility in which the courtier uses degrading and disqualifying expressions, when he speaks of himself in his adulatory addresses to his sovereign. When a good man draws near the close of a life, not free indeed from faults, but pure from crime, a life spent in the habitual exercise of all those virtues which adorn and dignify human nature, and in the uniform approach to that perfection, which is confessedly unattainable in this imperfect state; when a man—perhaps like Dr. Price, whose name will be ever pronounced with affectionate veneration and deep regard by all the friends of philosophy, virtue, and mankind—is about to resign his soul into the hands of his Maker, he ought to do it, not only with a reliance on his mercy, but his justice; a generous confidence and pious resignation should be blended in his deportment. It does not become him to pay the blasphemous homage of deprecating the wrath of God, when he ought to throw himself into the arms of his love. He is not to think that virtue is one thing here, and another in heaven; or that he on whom blessings and eulogisms are ready to burst from all honest tongues, can be an object of punishment with him who is infinitely more benevolent than any of his creatures.

These remarks may be thought foreign to the sucject in question; but in fact they are not so. Public worship

will be tinctured with gloom, while our ideas of its object are darkened by superstition; it will be infected with hypocrisy, while its professions and tenets run counter to the genuine, unperverted moral sense of mankind; it will not meet the countenance of philosophers so long as we are obliged to unlearn our ethics, in order to learn divinity. Let it be considered that these opinions greatly favour immorality. The doctrine that all are vile, and equally merit a state of punishment, is an idea as consolatory to the profligate, as it is humiliating to the saint; and that is one reason why it has always been a favourite doctrine. The indecent confidence of a Dodd,* and the debasing terrors of a Johnson, or of more blameless men than he, spring from one and the same source. It prevents the genuine workings of real penitence, by enjoining confessions of imaginary demerit; it quenches religious gratitude, because conceiving only of two states of retribution, both in the extreme, and feeling that our crimes, whatever they may be, cannot have deserved the one, we are not sufficiently thankful for the prospect of the other, which we look upon as only a necessary alternative. Lastly, it dissolves the connexion between religion and common life, by introducing a set of phrases and a standard of moral feeling, totally different from those ideas of praise and blame, merit and demerit, upon which we do and must act in our commerce with our fellow-creatures.

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* "And admitted, as I trust I shall be, to the realms of bliss before you, I shall hail your arrival there with transport, and rejoice to acknowledge that you was my comforter, my advocate, and my friend."—*Letter from Dr. Dodd to Dr. Johnson.* See Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. ii. p. 140.

There are periods in which the human mind seems to slumber, but this is not one of them. A keen spirit of research is now abroad, and demands reform. Perhaps in none of the nations of Europe will their articles of faith, or their church establishments, or their modes of worship be able to maintain their ground for many years in exactly the same position in which they stand at present. Religion and manners reciprocally act upon one another. As religion, well understood, is a most powerful agent in meliorating and softening our manners; so, on the other hand, manners, as they advance in cultivation, tend to correct and refine our religion. Thus, to a nation in any degree acquainted with the social feelings, human sacrifices, and sanguinary rites, could never long appear obligatory. The mild spirit of Christianity has, no doubt, had its influence in softening the ferocity of the Gothic times; and the increasing humanity of the present period will, in its turn, produce juster ideas of Christianity, and diffuse through the solemnities of our worship, the celebration of our sabbaths, and every observance connected with religion, that air of amenity and sweetness, which is the offspring of literature, and the peaceful intercourses of society. The age which has demolished dungeons, rejected torture, and given so fair a prospect of abolishing the iniquity of the slave trade, cannot long retain among its articles of belief the gloomy perplexities of Calvinism, and the heart-withering perspective of cruel and never-ending punishments.

A LEGACY

FOR

YOUNG LADIES,

CONSISTING OF

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES,

IN PROSE AND VERSE.

PREFACE.

The late Mrs. Barbauld was one of the best friends of youth. In her "Early Lessons," and "Prose Hymns," she has condescended to apply her admirable genius to the instruction even of infant minds. Several excellent pieces, adapted to children of different ages, she contributed to Dr. Aikin's "Evenings at Home." That elegant volume of verse and prose, "The Female Speaker," was compiled by her for the use of young ladies, for whom she also made a selection from the Tatlers, Spectators, and Guardians, prefixing to it an instructive and beautiful Essay. In others of her productions she has given valuable advice to parents on the subject of instruction; and her "Poems" contain many pieces worthy to be early reposited among the choicest stores of an elegant and ingenious mind.

Many young persons of both sexes partook, during the course of her long life, of the benefit of her personal instructions; and in the present volume she may be regarded as continuing even from the grave to delight and improve the rising generation.

These pieces were found among her papers by the members of her own family. Some of them enforce moral truths; others contain instruction in history and other branches of the graver studies of youth; but the greater number are of a light and elegant cast, adapted to exercise the ingenuity and amuse the fancy while they refine

the taste. Those in the form of letters were all addressed to different ladies whom she favoured with her friendship.

Had she herself presented these pieces to the public, it is probable that she would in some instances have extended them by additions which, from her own pen, would have enhanced their value, but which it would have been presumption in any other to attempt. None of them, however, can properly be called fragments: and it was so natural to her to express herself with the highest beauty and perfection of style, that in this respect little difference would be found either in verse or prose, between the slightest sketch she ever traced and the most finished of her admired productions.

LUCY AIKIN.

Hampstead, Dec. 1825.

A LEGACY

FOR

YOUNG LADIES.

TRUE MAGICIANS.

TO MISS C.

MY DEAR SARAH,

I HAVE often reflected, since I left you, on the wonderful powers of magic exhibited by you and your sister. The dim obscurity of that grotto hollowed out by your hands under the laurel hedge, where you used to mix the ingredients of your incantations, struck us with awe and terror; and the broom which you so often brandished in your hands made you look very like witches indeed. I must confess, however, that some doubts have now and then arisen in my mind, whether or no you were truly initiated in the secrets of your art; and these suspicions gathered strength after you had suffered us and yourself to be so drenched as we all were on that rainy Tuesday; which to say the least was a very odd circumstance, considering you had the command of the weather.—As I was pondering these matters alone in the chaise between Epsom and London, I fell asleep and had the following dream.

I thought I had been travelling through an unknown country, and came at last to a thick wood cut out into several groves and avenues, the gloom of which inspired thoughtfulness, and a certain mysterious dread of unknown powers came upon me. I entered however one of the avenues, and found it terminated in a magnificent portal, through which I could discern confusedly among thick foliage, cloistered arches and Grecian porticoes, and people walking and conversing amongst the trees. Over the portal was the following inscription: "*Here dwell the true magicians. Nature is our servant. Man is our pupil. We change, we conquer, we create.*"

As I was hesitating whether or no I should presume to enter, a pilgrim who was sitting under the shade offered to be my guide, assuring me that these magicians would do me no harm, and that so far from having any objection to be observed in their operations, they were pleased with any opportunity of exhibiting them to the curious. In therefore I went, and addressed the first of the magicians I met with, who asked me whether I liked panoramas. On replying that I thought them very entertaining, she took me to a little eminence and bade me look round. I did so, and beheld the representation of the beautiful vale of Dorking, with Norbury-park and Box-hill to the north, Riegate to the east, and Leith tower with the Surry hills to the south. After I had admired for some time the beauty and accuracy of the painting, a vast curtain seemed to be drawn gradually up, and my view extended on all sides. On one hand I traced the windings of the Thames up to Oxford, and stretched my eye westward over Salisbury Plain, and across the Bristol Channel into the romantic country of South Wales; northward the view extended

to Lincoln cathedral, and York minster towering over the rest of the churches. Across the Sussex downs I had a clear view of the British Channel, and the opposite coast of France with its ports blockaded by our fleets. As the horizon of the panorama still extended, I spied the towers of Notre Dame, and the Tuilleries, and my eye wandered at large over "The vine-covered hills and gay regions of France," quite down to the source of the Loire. At the same time the great Atlantic ocean opened to my view; and on the other hand I saw the lake of Geneva, and the dark ridge of mount Jura, and discovered the summits of the Alps covered with snow; and beyond, the orange groves of Italy, the majestic dome of St. Peter's, and the smoking crater of Vesuvius. As the curtain still rose, I stretched my view over the Mediterranean, the scene of ancient glory, the Archipelago studded with islands, the shores of the Bosphorus, and the gilded minarets and cypress groves of Constantinople. Throwing back a look to the less attractive north, I saw pictured the rugged, broken coast of Norway, the cheerless moors of Lapland, and the interminable desolation of the plains of Siberia. Turning my eye again southward, the landscape extended to the plains of Barbary, covered with date-trees; and I discerned the points of pyramids appearing above the horizon, and saw the Delta and the seven-mouthed Nile. In short, the curtain still rose, and the view extended further and further till the panorama took in the whole globe. I cannot express to you the pleasure I felt as I saw mountains, seas, and islands, spread out before me. Sometimes my eye wandered over the vast plains of Tartary, sometimes it expatiated in the savannahs of America. I saw men with dark skins, white

cotton turbans wreathed about their heads, and long flowing robes of silk; others almost naked under a vertical sun. I saw whales sporting in the northern seas, and elephants trampling amidst fields of maize and forests of palm-trees. I seemed to have put a girdle about the earth, and was gratified with an infinite variety of objects which I thought I never could be weary of contemplating. At length, turning towards the magician who had entertained me with such an agreeable exhibition, and asking her name, she informed me it was *Geography*.

My attention was next arrested by a sorceress, who, I was told, possessed the power of calling up from the dead whomsoever she pleased, man or woman, in their proper habits and figures, and obliging them to converse and answer questions. She held a roll of parchment in her hand, and had an air of great dignity. I confess that I felt a little afraid; but having been somewhat encouraged by the former exhibition, I ventured to ask her to give me a specimen of her power, in case there was nothing unlawful in it. "Whom," said she, "do you wish to behold?" After considering some time, I desired to see Cicero the Roman orator. She made some talismanic figures on the sand, and presently he arose to my view, his neck and head bare, the rest of his body in a flowing toga, which he gathered round him with one hand, and stretching out the other very gracefully, he recited to me one of his orations against Catiline. He also read to me, which was more than I could in reason have expected, several of his familiar letters to his most intimate friends. I next desired that Julius Cæsar might be called up: on which he appeared, his hair nicely arranged, and the fore part of his head, which was bald, covered with

wreaths of laurel; and he very obligingly gave me a particular account of his expedition into Gaul. I wished to see the youth of Macedon, but was a little disappointed in his figure, for he was low in stature and held his head awry; but I saw him manage Bucephalus with admirable courage and address, and was afterwards introduced with him into the tent of Darius, where I was greatly pleased with the generosity and politeness of his behaviour. I afterwards expressed some curiosity to see a battle, if I might do it with safety, and was gratified with the sea-fight of Actium. I saw, after the first onset, the galleys of Cleopatra turning their prows and flying from the battle, and Antony, to his eternal shame, quitting the engagement and making sail after her. I then wished to call up all the kings of England, and they appeared in order one after the other, with their crowns and the insigna of their dignity, and walked over the stage for my amusement, much like the descendants of Banquo in Macbeth. Their queens accompanied them, trailing their robes upon the ground, and the bishops with their mitres, and judges, and generals, and eminent persons of every class. I asked many questions as they passed, and received a great deal of information relative to the laws, manners, and transactions of past times. I did not, however, always meet with direct answers to my questions. For instance, when I called up Homer, and after some other conversation asked him where he was born, he only said, "Guess!" And when I asked Louis the Fourteenth who was the man in the iron mask, he frowned and would not tell me. I took a great deal of pleasure in calling up the shades of distinguished people in different ages and countries, making them stand close by one another, and comparing

their manners and costume. Thus I measured Catharine of Russia against Semiramis, and Aristotle against Lord Bacon. I could have spent whole years in conversation with so many celebrated persons, and promised myself that I would often frequent this obliging magician. Her name, I found, was in heaven *Clio*, on earth *History*.

I saw another who was making a charm for two friends, one of whom was going to the East Indies: they were bitterly lamenting that when they were parted at so great a distance from each other they could no longer communicate their thoughts, but must be cut off from each other's society. Presenting them with a talisman inscribed with four-and-twenty black marks, "Take this," she said; "I have breathed a voice upon it: by means of this talisman you shall still converse, and hear one another as distinctly when half the globe is between you, as if you were talking together in the same room." The two friends thanked her for such an invaluable present, and retired. Her name was *Abracadabra*.

I was next invited to see a whispering-gallery of a most curious and uncommon structure. To make the experiment of its powers, a young poet of a very modest appearance, who was stealing along in a retired walk, was desired to repeat a verse in it. He applied his lips to the wall, and whispered in a low voice, "*Rura mihi et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes.*" The sound ran along the walls for some time in a kind of low whisper; but every minute it grew louder and louder, till at length it was echoed and re-echoed from every part of the gallery, and seemed to be pronounced by a multitude of voices at once, in different languages, till the whole dome was filled with the sound.

There was a strong smell of incense. The gallery was constructed by *Fame*.

The good pilgrim next conducted me to a cave where several sorceresses, very black and grim, were amusing themselves with making lightning, thunder, and earthquakes. I saw two vials of cold liquor, mixed together, and flames burst forth from them. I saw some insignificant-looking black grains, which would throw palaces and castles into the air. I saw—and it made my hair stand on end—a headless man who lifted up his arm and grasped a sword. I saw men flying through the air, without wings, over the tops of towns and castles, and come down unhurt. The cavern was very black, and the smoke and fires and mephitic blasts and sulphureous vapours that issued from it gave the whole a very tremendous appearance. I did not stay long, but as I retired I saw *Chemistry* written on the walls in letters of flame, with several other names which I do not now remember.

My companion whispered me that some of these were suspected of communication with the evil genii, and that the demon of War had been seen to resort to the cave. "But now," said the pilgrim, "I will lead you to enchanters who deserve all your veneration, and are even more beneficent than those you have already seen." He then led me to a cavern that opened upon the sea shore: it blew a terrible storm, the waves ran mountains high, the wind roared, and vessels were driven against each other with a terrible shock. A female figure advanced and threw a little oil upon the waves; they immediately subsided, the winds were still, the storm was laid, and the vessels pursued their course in safety. "By what magic is this performed?" exclaimed I. "The magician is *Meek-*

ness," replied my conductor: "she can smooth the roughest sea, and allay the wildest storm."

My view was next directed to a poor wretch who lay groaning in a most piteous manner, and crushed to the earth with a mountain on his breast: he uttered piercing shrieks, and seemed totally unable to rise or help himself. One of these good magicians, whose name I found was *Patience*, advanced and struck the mountain with a wand; on which, to my great surprise, it diminished to a size not more than the load of an ordinary porter, which the man threw over his shoulders with something very like a smile, and marched off with a firm step and very composed air.

I must not pass over a charmer of a very pleasing appearance and lively aspect. She possessed the power (a very useful one in a country so subject to fogs and rains as this is) of gilding a landscape with sunshine whenever she breathed upon it. Her name was *Cheerfulness*. Indeed you may remember that your papa brought her down with him on that very rainy day when we could not go out at all, and he played on his flute to you, and you all danced.

I was next struck, on ascending an eminence, with a most dreary landscape. All the flat country was one stagnant marsh. Amidst the rushy grass lay the fiend Ague, listless and shivering: on the bare and bleak hills sat Famine, with a few shells of acorns before her, of which she had eaten the fruit. The woods were tangled and pathless; the howl of wolves was heard. A few smoky huts, or caves, not much better than the dens of wild beasts, were all the habitations of men that presented themselves. "Miserable country!" I exclaimed; "step-child of nature!" "This," said my conductor, "is Britain

as our ancestors possessed it." "And by what magic," I replied, "has it been converted into the pleasant land we now inhabit?" "You shall see," said he. "It has been the work of one of our most powerful magicians. Her name is *Industry*." At the word she advanced and waved her wand over the scene. Gradually the waters ran off into separate channels, and left rich meadows covered with innumerable flocks and herds. The woods disappeared, except what waved gracefully on the tops of the hills, or filled up the unsightly hollows. Wherever she moved her wand, roads, bridges, and canals laid open and improved the face of the country. A numerous population, spread abroad in the fields, were gathering in the harvest. Smoke from warm cottages ascended through the trees, pleasant towns and villages marked the several points of distance. Last, the Thames was filled with forests of masts, and proud London appeared with all its display of wealth and grandeur.

I do not know whether it was the pleasure I received from this exhilarating scene, or the carriage having just got upon the pavement, which awakened me; but I determined to write out my dream, and advise you to cultivate your acquaintance with all the *true Arts of Magic*.

A LECTURE ON THE USE OF WORDS.

My dear mamma, who worked you this scarf? it is excessively pretty.

I am sorry for it, my dear.

Sorry, mamma! are you sorry it is pretty?

No, but I am sorry if it is *excessively* pretty.

Why so?—a thing cannot be too pretty, can it?

If so, it cannot be excessively pretty. Pray what do you mean by excessively pretty?

Why excessively pretty means—it means very pretty.

What does the word excessively come from? What part of speech is it? You know your grammar?

It is an adverb: the words that end in *ly* are adverbs.

Adverbs are derived from adjectives by adding *ly*, you should have said;—excessive, excessively. And what is the noun from which they are both derived?

Excess.

And what does excess mean?

It means too much of any thing.

You see then that it implies a fault, and therefore cannot be applied as a commendation. We say a man is excessively greedy, excessively liberal; a woman excessively fine: but not that a man is excessively wise, a woman excessively faithful to her husband; because in these there is no excess: nor is there in beauty, that being the true and just proportion which gives pleasure.

But we say excessively kind.

We do, because kindness has its limits. A person may be too kind to us, who exposes himself to a great and serious inconvenience to give us a slight pleasure: we also may mean by it exceeding that kindness which we have a claim to expect. But when people use it, as they often do, on the slightest occasion, it is certainly as wrong as excessively pretty.

But, mamma, must we always consider so much the exact meaning of words? Every body says excessively pretty, and excessively tall, and infinitely obliged to you.—What harm can it do?

That every body does it I deny; that the generality do it is very true; but it is likewise true, that the generality are not to be taken as a pattern in any thing. As to the harm it does,—in the first place it hurts our sincerity.

Why, it is not telling a lie sure?

Certainly I do not mean to say it is; but it tends to sap and undermine the foundations of our integrity, by making us careless, if not in the facts we assert, yet in the measure and degree in which we assert them. If we do not pretend to love those we have no affection for, or to admire those we despise, at least we lead them to think we admire them more and love them better than we really do; and this prepares the way for more serious deviations from truth. So much for its concern with morality:—but it has likewise a very bad effect on our taste. What, think you, is the reason that young people, especially, run into these vague and exaggerated expressions?

What is vague, mamma?

It means what has no precise, definite signification. Young people run into these, sometimes indeed from

having more feeling than judgement, but more commonly from not knowing how to separate their ideas and tell what it is they are pleased with. They either do not know, or will not give themselves the trouble to mark, the qualities, or to describe the scenes which disgust or please them, and hope to cover their deficiency by these overwhelming expressions; as if your dress-maker, not knowing your shape, should make a large loose frock that would cover you over were you twice as tall as you are. Now you would have shown your taste if in commending my scarf you had said that the pattern was light, or it was rich, or that the work was neat and true; but by saying it was excessively pretty, you showed you had not considered what it was you admired in it. Did you never hear of the countryman who said "there will be monstrous few apples this year, and those few will be huge little." Poets run into this fault when they give unmeaning epithets instead of appropriate description;—young ladies, when in their letters they run into exaggerated expressions of friendship.

You have often admired in this painting the variety of tints shaded into one another. Well! what would you think of a painter who should spread one deep blue over all the sky, and one deep green over the grass and trees? would not you say he was a dauber? and made near objects and distant objects, and objects in the sun and objects in the shade, all alike? I think I have some of your early performances in which you have coloured prints pretty much in this style; but you would not paint so now?

No, indeed.

Then do not talk so: do not paint so with words.

THE PINE AND THE OLIVE:

A FABLE.

A Stoic, swelling with the proud consciousness of his own worth, took a solitary walk; and straying amongst the groves of Academus, he sat down between an Olive and a Pine tree. His attention was soon excited by a murmur which he heard among the leaves. The whispers increased; and listening attentively, he plainly heard the Pine say to the Olive as follows: "Poor tree! I pity thee; thou now spreadest thy green leaves and exultest in all the pride of youth and spring; but how soon will thy beauty be tarnished! The fruit which thou exhaustest thyself to bear, shall hardly be shaken from thy boughs before thou shalt grow dry and withered; thy green veins, now so full of juice, shall be frozen; naked and bare thou wilt stand exposed to all the storms of winter, whilst my firmer leaf shall resist the change of the seasons. *Unchangeable* is my motto, and through the various vicissitudes of the year I shall continue equally green and vigorous as I am at present."

The Olive, with a graceful wave of her boughs, replied: "It is true thou wilt always continue as thou art at present. Thy leaves will keep that sullen and gloomy green in which they are now arrayed, and the stiff regularity of thy branches will not yield to those storms which will

bow down many of the feebler tenants of the grove. Yet I wish not to be like thee. I rejoice when nature rejoices; and when I am desolate, nature mourns with me. I fully enjoy pleasure in its season, and I am contented to be subject to the influences of those seasons and that economy of nature by which I flourish. When the spring approaches, I feel the kindly warmth; my branches swell with young buds, and my leaves unfold; crowds of singing birds which never visit thy noxious shade, sport on my boughs, my fruit is offered to the Gods and rejoices men; and when the decay of nature approaches, I shed my leaves over the funeral of the falling year, and am well contented not to stand a single exemption to the mournful desolation I see everywhere around me."

The Pine was unable to frame a reply; and the philosopher turned away his steps rebuked and humbled.

ON RIDDLES.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,

I PRESUME you are now all come home for the holidays, and that the brothers and sisters and cousins, papas and mammas, uncles and aunts, are all met cheerfully round a Christmas fire, enjoying the company of their friends and relations, and eating plum pudding and mince pie. These are very good things; but one cannot always be eating plum pudding and mince pie: the days are short, and the weather bad, so that you cannot be much abroad; and I think you must want something to amuse you. Besides, if you have been employed as you ought to be at school, and if you are quick and clever, as I hope you are, you will want some employment for that part of you which thinks, as well as that part of you which eats; and you will like better to solve a riddle than to crack a nut or a walnut. Finding out riddles is the same kind of exercise to the mind which running and leaping and wrestling in sport are to the body. They are of no use in themselves,—they are not work, but play; but they prepare the body, and make it alert and active for any thing it may be called to perform in labour or war. So does the finding out of riddles, if they are good especially, give quickness of thought, and a facility of turning about a problem every way, and viewing it in every possible light. When Archimedes coming out of the bath cried

in transport, "*Eureka!*" (I have found it!) he had been exercising his mind precisely in the same manner as you will do when you are searching about for the solution of a riddle.

And pray, when you are get together, do not let any little Miss or Master say, with an affected air, "O! do not ask me; I am so stupid I never can guess." They do not mean you should think them stupid and dull; they mean to imply that these things are too trifling to engage their attention. If they are employed better, it is very well; but if not, say, "I am very sorry indeed you are so dull, but we that are clever and quick will exercise our wits upon these; and as our arms grow stronger by exercise, so will our wits."

Riddles are of high antiquity, and were the employment of grave men formerly. The first riddle that we have on record was proposed by Sampson at a wedding feast to the young men of the Philistines, who were invited upon the occasion. The feast lasted seven days; and if they found it out within the seven days, Sampson was to give them thirty suits of clothes and thirty sheets; and if they could not guess it, they were to forfeit the same to him. The riddle was; "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." He had killed a lion, and left its carcase; on returning soon after, he found a swarm of bees had made use of the skeleton as a hive, and it was full of honey-comb. Struck with the oddness of the circumstance, he made a riddle of it. They puzzled about it the whole seven days, and would not have found it out at last if his wife had not told them.

The Sphinx was a great riddler. According to

the fable, she was half a woman and half a lion. She lived near Thebes, and to every body that came she proposed a riddle; and if they did not find it out, she devoured them. At length Œdipus came, and she asked him, "What is that animal which walks on four legs in the morning, two at noon, and three at night?" Œdipus answered, Man:—in childhood, which is the morning of life, he crawls on his hands and feet; in middle age, which is noon, he walks erect on two; in old age he leans on a crutch, which serves for a supplementary third foot.

The famous wise men of Greece did not disdain to send puzzles to each other. They are also fond of riddles in the East. There is a pretty one in some of their tales.—"What is that tree which has twelve branches, and each branch thirty leaves, which are all black on one side and white on the other?"—The tree is the year; the branches the months; the leaves black on one side and white on the other signify day and night. Our Anglo-Saxon ancestors also had riddles, some of which are still preserved in a very ancient manuscript.

A riddle is a description of a thing without the name: but as it is meant to puzzle, it appears to belong to something else than what it really does, and often seems contradictory; but when you have guessed it, it appears quite clear. It is a bad riddle if you are at all in doubt when you have found it out whether you are right or no. A riddle is not verbal, as charades, conundrums, and rebuses are: it may be translated into any language, which the others cannot. Addison would put them all in the class of false wit: but Swift, who was as great a genius, amused himself with making all sorts of puzzles;

and therefore I think you need not be ashamed of reading them. It would be pretty entertainment for you to make a collection of the better ones,—for many are so dull that they are not worth spending time about. I will conclude by sending you a few which will be new to you.

I.

I often murmur, yet I never weep;
I always lie in bed, yet never sleep;
My mouth is wide, and larger than my head,
And much disgorges though it ne'er is fed;
I have no legs or feet, yet swiftly run,
And the more falls I get, move faster on.

II.

Ye youths and ye virgins, come list to my tale,
With youth and with beauty my voice will prevail.
My smile is enchanting, and golden my hair,
And on earth I am fairest of all that is fair;
But my name it perhaps may assist you to tell,
That I'm banish'd alike both from heaven and hell.
There 's a charm in my voice, 'tis than music more sweet,
And my tale oft repeated, untired I repeat.
I flatter, I soothe, I speak kindly to all,
And wherever you go, I am still within call.
Tho' I thousands have blest, 't is a strange thing to say,
That not one of the thousands e'er wishes my stay,
But when most I enchant him, impatient the more,
The minutes seem hours till my visit is o'er.
In the chase of my love I am ever employ'd,
Still, still he 's pursued, and yet never enjoy'd;

O'er hills and o'er valleys unwearied I fly,
But should I o'ertake him, that instant I die;
Yet I spring up again, and again I pursue,
The object still distant, the passion still new.
Now guess,—and to raise your astonishment most,
While you seek me you have me, when found I am lost.

III.

I never talk but in my sleep;
I never cry, but sometimes weep;
My doors are open day and night;
Old age I help to better sight;
I, like camelion, feed on air,
And dust to me is dainty fare.

IV.

We are spirits all in white,
On a field as black as night;
There we dance and sport and play,
Changing every changing day:
Yet with us is wisdom found,
As we move in mystic round.
Mortals, wouldst thou know the grains
That Ceres heaps on Libya's plains,
Or leaves that yellow Autumn strews,
Or the stars that Herschel views,
Or find how many drops would drain
The wide-scooped bosom of the main,
Or measure central depths below,—
Ask of us, and thou shalt know.

With fairy feet we compass round
The pyramid's capacious bound,
Or step by step ambitious climb
The cloud-capt mountain's height sublime.
Riches though we do not use,
'T is ours to gain, and ours to lose.
From Araby the Blest we came,
In every land our tongue 's the same;
And if our number you require,
Go count the bright Aonian quire.
Wouldst thou cast a spell to find
The track of light, the speed of wind,
Or when the snail with creeping pace
Shall the swelling globe embrace;
Mortal, ours the powerful spell;—
Ask of us, for we can tell.

V.

An unfortunate maid,
I by love was betray'd,
And wasted and pined by my grief;
To deep solitudes then,
Of rock, mountain and glen,
From the world I retired for relief.

Yet there by the sound
Of my voice I am found,
Though no footstep betrays where I tread;
The poet and lover,
My haunts to discover,
Still leave at the dawn their soft bed.

If the poet sublime
Address me in rime,
In rime I support conversation;
To the lover's fond moan
I return groan for groan,
And by sympathy give consolation.

Though I 'm apt, 't is averr'd,
To love the last word,
Nor can I pretend 't is a fiction;
I shall ne'er be so rude
On your talk to intrude
With anything like contradiction.

The fair damsels of old
By their mothers were told,
That maids should be seen and not heard;
The reverse is my case,
For you 'll ne'er see my face,
To my voice all my charms are transferr'd.

VI.

From rosy bowers we issue forth,
From east to west, from south to north,
Unseen, unfelt, by night, by day,
Abroad we take our airy way:
We foster love and kindle strife,
The bitter and the sweet of life:
Piercing and sharp, we wound like steel;
Now, smooth as oil, those wounds we heal:

Not strings of pearl are valued more,
Or gems enchased in golden ore;
Yet thousands of us every day,
Worthless and vile, are thrown away.
Ye wise, secure with bars of brass
The double doors through which we pass;
For, once escaped, back to our cell
No human art can us compel.

VII.

This creature, though extremely thin,
In shape is almost square;
Has many heads, on which ne'er grew
One single lock of hair.

Yet several of their tribe there are,
Whose case you must bewail,
Of whom in truth it may be said
They 've neither head nor tail.

In purer times, ere vice prevailed,
They met with due regard,
The wholesome counsels that they gave,
With reverence were heard.

To marriages and funerals
Their presence added grace,
And though the king himself were by,
They took the highest place.

Their business is to stir up men
A constant watch to keep;
Instead of which,—O sad reverse,—
They make them fall asleep.

Not so in former times it was,
Howe'er it came to pass;
Though they their company ne'er left
Till empty was the glass.

The moderns can't be charged with this,
But may their foes defy,
To prove such practices on them,
Though they 're extremely dry.

ENIGMA.

TO THE LADIES.

HARD is my stem and dry, no root is found
To draw nutritious juices from the ground;
Yet of your ivory fingers' magic touch
The quickening power and strange effect is such,
My shrivelled trunk a sudden shade extends,
And from rude storms your tender frame defends;
A hundred times a day my head is seen
Crowned with a floating canopy of green;
A hundred times, as struck with sudden blight,
The spreading verdure withers to the sight.
Not Jonah's gourd by power unseen was made
So soon to flourish, and so soon to fade.
Unlike the Spring's gay race, I flourish most
When groves and gardens all their blooms have lost;
Lift my green head against the rattling hail,
And brave the driving snows and freezing gale;
And faithful lovers oft, when storms impend,
Beneath my friendly shade together bend,
There join their heads within the green recess,
And in the close-wove covert nearer press.
But lately am I known to Britain's isle,
Enough—You 've guessed—I see it by your smile.

THE KING IN HIS CASTLE.

MY DEAR LUCY,

HAVE you made out who the four Sisters are?* If you have, I will tell you another story. It is about a monarch who lives in a sumptuous castle, raised high above the ground and built with exquisite art. He takes a great deal of state upon him, and, like Eastern monarchs, transacts every thing by means of his ministers; for he never appears himself, and indeed lives in so retired a manner, that though it has often excited the curiosity of his subjects, his residence is hidden from them with as much jealous care as that of Pygmalion was from the Tyrians; and it has never been discovered with any certainty which of the chambers of the castle he actually inhabits, though by means of his numerous spies he is acquainted with what passes in every one of them.

But I must proceed to give you some account of his chief ministers; and I will begin with two who are mutes. Their office is to bring him quick and faithful intelligence of all that is going forward; this they perform in a very ingenious manner. You have heard of the Mexicans, who, not having the art of writing, supplied the deficiency by painting every thing they have a mind to communicate; so that when the Spaniards came amongst them, they sent

* See this piece in Evening's at Home.

regular accounts to the king of their landing and all their proceedings, in very intelligible language, without writing a single word. Now this is just the method of these two mutes; they are continually employed in making pictures of every thing that passes, which they do with wonderful quickness and accuracy, all in miniature, but in exact proportion, and coloured after life. These pictures they bring every moment to a great gate of the palace, where the king receives them.

The next I shall mention are two drummers. These have each a great drum, on which they beat soft or loud, quick or slow, according to the occasion. They often entertain the king with music; besides which they are arrived at such wonderful perfection upon their instrument, and make the strokes with such precision, that by the different beats, accompanied by proper pauses and intervals, they can express any thing they wish to tell;—and the king relies upon them as much as upon his mutes. There is a sort of covered way made in the form of a labyrinth from the station of the drummers to the inner rooms of the palace.

There is a pair of officers,—for you must know, the offices go mightily by pairs,—whose department it is to keep all nuisances from the palace. They are lodged for that purpose under a shed or penthouse built with that view before the front of the palace: they likewise gather and present to the monarch sweet odours, essences and perfumes, with which he regales himself: they likewise inspect the dishes that are served up at his table; and if any of them are not fit to be eaten, they give notice for their removal; and sometimes, if any thing offensive is about to enter the palace, or the agents to shut

two little doors which are in their keeping, and by that means prevent its entrance.

The agents are two very active officers of long reach and quick execution. The executive part of government is chiefly intrusted to them; they obey the king's commands with a readiness and vigour truly admirable; they defend the castle from all assaults, and are vigilant in keeping at a distance every annoyance. Their office is branched out into ten subordinate ones, but in cases which require great exertion they act together.

I must not omit the beef-eaters. These stand in rows at the great front gate of the palace, much as they do at St. James', only that they are dressed in white. Their office is to prepare the viands for the king, who is so very lazy and so much accustomed to have every thing done for him, that, like the king of Bantam and some other Eastern monarchs, he requires his meat to be chewed before it is presented to him.

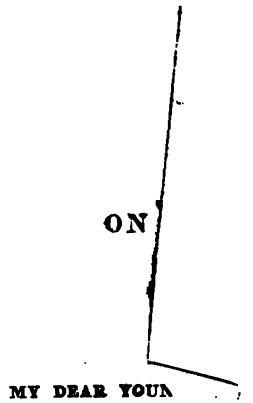
Close by the beef-eaters lives the king's orator, a fat portly gentleman, of something a Dutch make, but remarkable voluble and nimble in his motions notwithstanding. He delivers the king's orders and explains his will. This gentleman is a good deal of an epicure, which I suppose is the reason he has his station so near to the beef-eaters. He is a perfect connoisseur in good eating, and assumes a right of tasting all the dishes; and the king pays the greatest regard to his opinion. Justice obliges me to confess that this orator is one of the most flippant and ungovernable of the king's subjects.

Among the inferior officers are the porters, two stout lusty fellows who carry the king about from place to place (for I am sure you are by this time too well acquainted

with his disposition to suppose he performs that office for himself;) but as most great men's officers have their deputies, so these lazy porters are very apt to get their business done by deputy, and to have people to carry *them* about.

I should never have done if I were to mention all the particulars of the domestic establishment and internal œconomy of the castle, which is all arranged with wonderful art and order; how the outgoings are proportioned to the income, and what a fellow-feeling there is between all the members of the family from the greatest to the meanest. The king, from his high birth, on which he values himself much,—being of a race and lineage quite different from any of his subjects,—and from his superior capacity, claims the most absolute obedience; though, as is frequently the case with kings, he is in fact most commonly governed by his ministers, who lead him where they please without his being sensible of it.—As you, my dear Lucy, have had more conversation with this king than most of your age have been honoured with, I dare say you will be at no loss in pointing him out. I therefore add no more but that I am

Yours, &c.



ON

MY DEAR YOUN

If I had not been a
tance in addressing m
begin the correspondence between us; for
sent ignorant of your particular pursuits: I cannot guess whether you are climbing the hill of science, or wandering among the flowers of fancy; whether you are stretching your powers to embrace the planetary system, or examining with a curious eye the delicate veinings of a green leaf, and the minute ramifications of a sea-weed; or whether you are toiling through the intricate and thorny mazes of grammar. Whichever of these is at present your employment, your general aim no doubt is the improvement of your mind; and we will therefore spend some time in considering what kind and degree of literary attainments sit gracefully upon the female character.

Every woman should consider herself as sustaining the general character of a rational being, as well as the more confined one belonging to the female sex; and therefore the motives for acquiring general knowledge and cultivating the taste are nearly the same to both sexes. The line of separation between the studies of a young man and a young woman appears to me to be chiefly fixed by this,—that a woman is excused from all professional

with his disposition to onal knowledge means all that is himself;) but as mo man for a peculiar profession or busi- ties, so these lazy n study in order to qualify themselves for done by deput ysic, for various departments in political life,

I should ing others from the pulpit or the professor's particular These all require a great deal of severe study and œcono cal knowledge; much of which is nowise valuable ful itself, but as a means to that particular profession. Now as a woman can never be called to any of these professions, it is evident you have nothing to do with such studies. A woman is not expected to understand the mysteries of politics, because she is not called to govern; she is not required to know anatomy, because she is not to perform surgical operations; she need not embarrass herself with theological disputes, because she will neither be called upon to make nor to explain creeds.

Men have various departments in active life; women have but one, and all women have the same, differently modified indeed by their rank in life and other incidental circumstances. It is to be a wife, a mother, a mistress of a family. The knowledge belonging to these duties is your professional knowledge, the want of which nothing will excuse. Literary knowledge therefore, in men, is often an indispensable duty; in women it can be only a desirable accomplishment. In women it is more immediately applied to the purposes of adorning and improving the mind, of refining the sentiments, and supplying proper stores for conversation. For general knowledge women have in some respects more advantages than men. Their avocations often allow them more leisure; their sedentary way of life disposes them to the domestic quiet amusement of reading; the share they take in the education of their

children throws them in the way of books. The uniform tenor and confined circle of their lives makes them eager to diversify the scene by descriptions which open to them a new world; and they are eager to gain an idea of scenes on the busy stage of life from which they are shut out by their sex. It is likewise particularly desirable for women to be able to give spirit and variety to conversation by topics drawn from the stores of literature, as the broader mirth and more boisterous gaiety of the other sex are to them prohibited. As their parties must be innocent, care should be taken that they do not stagnate into insipidity. I will venture to add, that the purity and simplicity of heart which a woman ought never, in her freest commerce with the world, to wear off; her very seclusion from the jarring interests and coarser amusements of society,—fit her in a peculiar manner for the worlds of fancy and sentiment, and dispose her to the quickest relish of what is pathetic, sublime, or tender. To you, therefore, the beauties of poetry, of moral painting, and all in general that is comprised under the term of polite literature, lie particularly open, and you cannot neglect them without neglecting a very copious source of enjoyment.

Languages are on some accounts particularly adapted to female study, as they may be learnt at home without experiments or apparatus, and without interfering with the habits of domestic life; as they form the style, and as they are the immediate inlet to works of taste. But the learned languages, the Greek especially, require a great deal more time than a young woman can conveniently spare. To the Latin there is not an equal objection; and if a young person has leisure, has an opportunity of learning it at home by being connected with literary people, and

is placed in a circle of society sufficiently liberal to allow her such an accomplishment, I do not see, if she has a strong inclination, why she should not make herself mistress of so rich a store of original entertainment:—it will not in the present state of things excite either a smile or a stare in fashionable company. To those who do not intend to learn the language, I would strongly recommend the learning so much of the grammar of it as will explain the name and nature of cases, genders, inflexion of verbs, &c.; of which, having only the imperfect rudiments in our own language, a mere English scholar can with difficulty form a clear idea. This is the more necessary, as all our grammars, being written by men whose early studies had given them a partiality for the learned languages, are formed more upon those than upon the real genius of our own tongue.

I was going now to mention French, but perceive I have written a letter long enough to frighten a young correspondent, and for the present I bid you adieu.

LETTER II.

FRENCH you are not only permitted to learn, but you are laid under the same necessity of acquiring it as your brother is of acquiring Latin. Custom has made the one as much expected from an accomplished woman, as the other from a man who has had a liberal education. The learning French, or indeed any language completely, includes reading, writing, and speaking it. But here I must take the liberty to offer my ideas, which differ something from those generally entertained, and you will give them

what weight you think they deserve. It seems to me that the efforts of young ladies in learning French are generally directed to what is unattainable; and if attained, not very useful,—the speaking it. It is utterly impossible, without such advantages as few enjoy, to speak a foreign language with fluency and a proper accent; and if even by being in a French family some degree of both is attained, it is soon lost by mixing with the world at large. As to the French which girls are obliged to speak at boarding-schools, it does very well to speak in England, but at Paris it would probably be less understood than English itself.

I do not mean by this to say that the speaking of French is not a very elegant accomplishment; and to those who mean to spend some time in France, or who being in very high life often see foreigners of distinction, it may be necessary; but in common life it is very little so: and for English people to meet together to talk a foreign language is truly absurd. There is a sarcasm against this practice as old as Chaucer's time—

> "....Frenche she spake ful fayre and fetisely,
> After the schole of Stratford atte Bowe,
> For Frenche of Paris was to her unknowe."

But with regard to reading French, the many charming publications in that language, particularly in polite literature, of which you can have no adequate idea by translation, render it a very desirable acquisition. Writing it is not more useful in itself than speaking, except a person has foreign letters to write; but it is necessary for understanding the language grammatically and fixing the rules in the mind. A young person who reads French with ease and is so well grounded as to write it grammatically, and has what I should call a good English pronunciation

of it, will by a short residence in France gain fluency and the accent; whereas one not grounded would soon forget all she had learned, though she had acquired some fluency in speaking. For speaking, therefore, love and cultivate your own: know all its elegancies, its force, its happy turns of expression, and possess yourself of all its riches. In foreign languages you have only to learn; but with regard to your own, you have probably to unlearn, and to avoid vulgarisms and provincial barbarisms.

If after you have learned French you should wish to add Italian, the acquisition will not be difficult. It is valuable on account of its poetry, in which it far excels the French, —and its music. The other modern languages you will hardly attempt, except led to them by some peculiar bent.

History affords a wide field of entertaining and useful reading. The chief thing to be attended to in studying it, is to gain a clear well-arranged idea of facts in chronological order, and illustrated by a knowledge of the places where such facts happened. Never read without tables and maps: make abstracts of what you read. Before you embarrass yourself in the detail of this, endeavour to fix well in your mind the arrangement of some leading facts, which may serve as landmarks to which to refer the rest. Connect the history of different countries together. In the study of history the different genius of a woman I imagine will show itself. The detail of battles, the art of sieges, will not interest her so much as manners and sentiment; this is the food she assimilates

laws of the universe, the nature and proper-
objects which surround us, it is unpardonable

not to know: it is more unpardonable to know, and not to feel the mind struck with lively gratitude. Under this head are comprehended natural history, astronomy, botany, experimental philosophy, chemistry, physics. In these you will rather take what belongs to sentiment and to utility than abstract calculations or difficult problems. You must often be content to know a thing is so, without understanding the proof. It belongs to a Newton to prove his sublime problems, but we may all be made acquainted with the result. You cannot investigate; you may remember. This will teach you not to despise common things, will give you an interest in every thing you see. If you are feeding your poultry, or tending your bees, or extracting the juice of herbs, with an intelligent mind you are gaining real knowledge; it will open to you an inexhaustible fund of wonder and delight, and effectually prevent you from depending for your entertainment on the poor novelties of fashion and expense.

But of all reading, what most ought to engage your attention are works of sentiment and morals. Morals is that study in which alone both sexes have an equal interest; and in sentiment yours has even the advantage. The works of this kind often appear under the seducing form of novel and romance: here great care, and the advice of your older friends is requisite in the selection. Whatever is true, however uncouth in the manner or dry in the subject, has a value from being true: but fiction in order to recommend itself must give us *la belle Nature*. You will find fewer plays fit for your perusal than novels, and fewer comedies than tragedies.

What particular share any one of the studies I have mentioned may engage of your attention will be determined

by your peculiar turn and bent of mind. But I shall conclude with observing, that a woman ought to have that general tincture of them all which marks the cultivated mind. She ought to have enough of them to engage gracefully in general conversation. In no subject is she required to be deep,—of none ought she to be ignorant. If she knows not enough to speak well, she should know enough to keep her from speaking at all; enough to feel her ground and prevent her from exposing her ignorance; enough to hear with intelligence, to ask questions with propriety, and to receive information where she is not qualified to give it. A woman who to a cultivated mind joins that quickness of intelligence and delicacy of taste which such a woman often possesses in a superior degree, with that nice sense of propriety which results from the whole, will have a kind of *tact* by which she will be able on all occasions to discern between pretenders to science and men of real merit. On subjects upon which she cannot talk herself, she will know whether a man talks with knowledge of his subject. She will not judge of systems, but by their systems she will be able to judge of men. She will distinguish the modest, the dogmatical, the affected, the over-refined, and give her esteem and confidence accordingly. She will know with whom to confide the education of her children, and how to judge of their progress and the methods used to improve them. From books, from conversation, from learned instructors, she will gather the flower of every science; and her mind, in assimilating every thing to itself, will adorn it with new graces. She will give the tone to the conversation even when she chooses to bear but an inconsiderable part in it. The modesty which prevents her from an unnecessary dis-

play of what she knows, will cause it to be supposed that her knowledge is deeper than in reality it is :—as when the landscape is seen through the veil of a mist, the bounds of the horizon are hid. As she will never obtrude her knowledge, none will ever be sensible of any deficiency in it, and her silence will seem to proceed from discretion rather than a want of information. She will seem to know every thing by leading every one to speak of what he knows ; and when she is with those to whom she can give no real information, she will yet delight them by the original turns of thought and sprightly elegance which will attend her manner of speaking on any subject. Such is the character to whom profest scholars will delight to give information, from whom others will equally delight to receive it :—the character I wish you to become, and to form which your application must be directed.

THE RICH AND THE POOR:

A DIALOGUE.

MAMMA! said Harriet Beechwood, I have just heard such a proud speech of a poor man! you would wonder if you heard it.

Not much, Harriet; for pride and poverty can very well agree together:—but what was it?

Why, mamma, you know the charity-school that Lady Mary has set up, and how neat the girls look in their brown stuff gowns and little straw bonnets.

Yes, I think it a very good institution; the poor girls are taught to read and spell and sew, and what is better still, to be good.

Well, mamma, Lady Mary's gardener, a poor man who lives in a cottage just by the great house, has a little girl; and so, because she was a pretty little girl, Lady Mary offered to put her into this school;—and do you know he would not let her go!

Indeed!

Yes: he thanked her, and said, "I have only one little girl, and I love her dearly; and though I am a poor man, I had rather work my fingers to the bone than she should wear a charity dress."

I do not doubt, my dear Harriet, that a great many people will have the same idea of this poor man's behaviour

which you have; but for my own part, I am inclined to think it indicates something of a noble and generous spirit.

Was it not proud to say she should not wear a charity dress?

Why should she?—would you wear a charity dress?

O, mamma, but this is a poor man!

He is able to pay for her learning, I suppose; otherwise he would certainly do wrong to refuse his child the advantage of instruction because his feelings were hurt by it.

Yes, he is going to put her to Dame Primmer's across the Green; she will have half a mile to walk.

That will do her no hurt.

But he is throwing his money away; for he might have his little girl taught for nothing; and as he is a poor man he ought to be thankful for it.

Pray what do you mean by a poor man?

O, a man—those men that live in poor houses, and work all day, and are hired for it.

I cannot tell exactly how you define a poor house: but as to working, your papa is in a public office, and works all day long, and more hours certainly than the labourer does; and he is hired to it, for he would not do the work but for the salary they give him.

But you do not live like those poor people, and you do not wear a check apron like the gardener's wife.

Neither am I covered with lace and jewels like a duchess: there is as much difference between our manner of living and that of many people above us in fortune, as between ours and this gardener's whom you call poor.

What is being poor then? is there no such thing?

Indeed I hardly know how to answer your question: rich and poor are comparative terms; and provided a man is in no want of the necessaries of life and is not in debt, he can only be said to be poor comparatively with others, of whom the same might be affirmed by those who are still richer. But to whatever degree of indigence you apply the term, you must take care not to confound a *poor man* with a *pauper*.

What is a pauper? I thought they had been the same thing?

A pauper is one who cannot maintain himself, and who is maintained by the charity of the community. Your gardener was not a pauper; he worked for what he had, and he paid for what he had; and therefore he had a right to expect that his child should not be confounded with the children of the idle, the profligate, and the dissolute, who are maintained upon charity. I wish the lower classes had more of this honourable pride.

Is it a crime to be a pauper?

To be a pauper is often the consequence of vice; and where it is not, it justly degrades a man from his rank in society. If the gardener's daughter were to wear a kind of charity badge, the little girls she plays with would consider her as having lost her rank in society. You would not like to lose your rank, and to be thrust down lower than your proper place in society. There are several things it would not at all hurt you to do, which you would not choose to do on this account. For instance, to carry a bandbox through the street;—yet it would not hurt you to carry a bandbox, you would carry a greater weight in your garden for pleasure.

But I thought gardeners and such sort of people had no rank?

That is a very great mistake. Every one has his rank, his place in society; and so far as rank is a source of honourable pride, there is less difference in rank between you and the gardener, than between the gardener and a pauper. Between the greater part of those we call different classes, there is only the difference of less and more; the spending a hundred, or five hundred, or five thousand a year; the eating off earthenware, or china, or plate: but there is a real and essential difference between the man who provides for his family by his own exertions, and him who is supported by charity. The gardener has a right to stretch out his nervous arm and to say, "This right hand, under Providence, provides for myself and my family; I earn what I eat, I am a burthen to no one, and therefore if I have any superfluity I have a right to spend it as I please, and to dress my little girl to my own fancy."

But do you not think, mamma, that a brown stuff gown and a straw bonnet would be a much properer dress for the lower sort of people than any thing gaudy? If they are much dressed, you know, we always laugh at their vulgar finery.

They care very little for your laughing at them; they do not dress to please you.

Whom do they dress to please?

Whom do you dress to please?

You, my dear mamma, and papa.

Not entirely, I fancy;—you tell me the truth, but not the whole truth. Well, they dress to please their

papas and mammas, their young companions, and their sweet-hearts.

I have often heard Lady Selina say, that if all the lower orders were to have a plain uniform dress, it would be much better; and that if a poor person is neat and clean, it is quite enough.

Better for whom?—enough for whom? for themselves or for us? They have a natural love of ornament as well as we have. It is true they can do our work as well in a plainer dress; but when the work is done and the time of enjoyment comes,—in the dance on the green, or the tea-party among their friends,—who shall hinder them from indulging their taste and fancy, and laying out the money they have so fairly earned in what best pleases them?

But they are not content without following our fashions; and they are so ridiculous in their imitations of them. I was quite diverted to see Molly the pastrycook's girl tossing her head about in a hat and ribbon which I dare say she thought very fashionable; but such a caricature of the mode—I was so diverted.

You may be diverted with a safer conscience when I assure you that the laugh goes round. London laughs at the country, the court laughs at the city, and I dare say your pastrycook's girl laughs at somebody who is distanced by herself in the race of fashion.

But every body says, and I have heard you say, mamma, that the kind of people I mean, and servants particularly, are very extravagant in dress.

That unfortunately is true: they very often are so, and when they marry they suffer for it severely; but do not you think many young ladies are equally so? Did you not see at your last dancing-school ball many a girl whose

father cannot give her a thousand pounds, covered with lace and ornaments?

It is very true.

Are not duchesses driven by extravagance to pawn their plate and jewels?

I have heard so.

The only security against improper expense is dignity of mind, and moderation: these are not common in any rank; and I do not know why we should expect them to be more common among the lower and uneducated classes than among the higher.—To return to your gardener. He has certainly a right to dress his girl as he pleases without asking you or me: but I shall think he does not make a wise use of that right if he lays out his money in finery, instead of providing the more substantial comforts and enjoyments of life. And I should think exactly the same of my neighbour in the great house in the park.

Have servants a rank?

Certainly; and you will find them very tenacious of it. A gentleman's butler will not go behind a coach; a lady's maid will not go on an errand.

Are they not very saucy to refuse doing it, if they are ordered?

No; if they refuse civilly. They are hired to do certain things, not to obey you in every thing. There are many ranks above, but there are also many ranks below them; and they have both the right and the inclination to support their place in society.

But their masters would respect them the more if they did not stand upon these punctilios.

But I have told you it is not our approbation they seek. When the lower orders mix with the higher, it is to maintain themselves and get money; and if they are honest, they will do their work faithfully: but it is amongst their equals that they seek for affection, applause, and admiration; and there they meet with it. It matters very little in what rank a man is, provided he is esteemed and reckoned a man of consequence there. The feelings of vanity are exactly the same in a countess' daughter dancing at court, and a milkwoman figuring at a country hop.

But surely, mamma, the countess' daughter will be more really elegant?

That will depend very much upon individual taste. However, the higher ranks have so many advantages for cultivating taste, so much money to lay out in decoration, and are so early taught the graces of air and manner to set off those decorations, that it would be absurd to deny their superiority in this particular. But Taste has one great enemy to contend with.

What is that?

Fashion,—an arbitrary and capricious tyrant, who reigns with the most despotic sway over that department which Taste alone ought to regulate. It is fashion that imprisons the slender nymph in the vast rotunda of the hoop and loads her with heavy ornaments, when she is conscious, if she dared rebel, she should dance lighter and look better in a dress of one tenth part of the price. Fashion sometimes orders her to cut off her beautiful tresses, and present the appearance of a cropped schoolboy; and though this is a sacrifice which a nun going to be profest looks upon as one of the severest she is to

make, she obeys without a murmur. The winter arrives, and she is cold; but Fashion orders her to leave off half her clothes, and be abroad half the night. She complies, though at the risk of her life. A great deal more might be said about this tyrant; but as we have had enough of grave conversation for the present, we will here drop the subject.

DESCRIPTION

OF

A CURIOUS ANIMAL

LATELY FOUND

IN THE WILDS OF DERBYSHIRE.

THIS little creature, which seems a very beautiful specimen of the species to which it belongs, is about the size of a common monkey, which it likewise much resembles in its agility and various tricks. The eye is very lively, wild, and roving; teeth white and sharp; body covered with a woolly integument, except the head and fore feet; hair rude and tangled, hangs about the shoulders and covers the forehead as low as the eyes, rest of the face naked; skin soft and white; cheeks full and of a glowing red; under lip swelled and pouting; paws white with streaks of brown; claws long, toes of the hind feet joined together.

Habits.—This animal walks, indifferently, on two or on four feet, feeds itself with its fore feet, makes a chattering noise, climbs, leaps and runs, and has a spring in its muscles equal to an antelope; has a wonderful suppleness in its limbs, which it can twist into various attitudes, all surprisingly graceful; is always in motion, except when bask-

ing by the fire, of which it is very fond in winter. Will often shake its hair over the whole face, which gives it a look of peculiar wildness. Is very good-natured and playful, caressing to its keeper and every one who takes notice of it. Is however easily put in a passion, and when angry makes a threatening noise, but is soon put to flight by the least show of resistance. If seized, kicks with its hind legs: is however tolerably docile, considering how lately it has been caught. Feeds on fruits, roots, or flesh; will eat cakes or nuts out of the hand. To be seen at the Rev. Mr. B.'s menagerie, with many other young animals equally curious.

ON THE CLASSICS.

THE authors known by the name of the Greek and Roman Classics have laid the foundation of all that is excellent in modern literature; and are so frequently referred to both in books and conversation, that a person of a cultivated mind cannot easily be content without obtaining some knowledge of them, even though he should not be able to read them in their original tongues. A clear and short account of these authors in a chronological series, together with a sketch of the character of their several productions, for the use of those who have either none or a very superficial knowledge of the languages they are written in, is as far as I know, a desideratum which it is much to be wished that some elegant scholar should supply: in the mean time a few general remarks upon them may be not unacceptable.

In the larger sense of the word, an author is called a Classic when his work has stood the test of time long enough to become a permanent part of the literature of his country. Of the number of writings which in their day have attained a portion of fame, very few in any age have survived to claim this honourable distinction. Every circumstance which gave temporary celebrity must be forgotten; party must have subsided; the voice of friends and of enemies must be silent; and the writer himself must have long mouldered in the dust, before the gates of

immortality are opened to him. It is in vain that he attempts to flatter or to soothe his contemporaries, they are not called to the decision; his merits are to be determined by a race he has never seen; the judges are not yet born who are to pronounce on the claims of Darwin and of Cowper. The severe impartiality of Posterity stands aloof from every consideration but that of excellence, and from her verdict there is no appeal.

It is true, indeed, that amidst the revolutions of ages, particularly before the invention of printing, accidental circumstances must often have had great influence in the preservation of particular writings: and we know and lament that many are lost which the learned world would give treasures of gold to recover. But it cannot easily happen that a work should be preserved without superior merit; and indeed we know from the testimony of antiquity, that the works which have come down to us, and which we read and admire, are in general the very works which by the Greeks and Romans themselves were esteemed most excellent.

It is impossible to contemplate without a sentiment of reverence and enthusiasm, these venerable writings which have survived the wreck of empires; and, what is more, of languages; which have received the awful stamp of immortality, and are crowned with the applause of so many successive ages. It is wonderful that words should live so much longer than marble temples;—words, which at first are only uttered breath; and, when afterwards enshrined and fixed in a visible form by the admirable invention of writing, committed to such frail and perishable materials: yet the light paper bark floats down the stream of time, and lives through the storms which have

sunk so many stronger built vessels. Homer is read, though *The grass now grows where Troy town stood:* and nations once despised as barbarous appreciate the merit of Cicero's orations on the banks of the Thames, when the long honours of the Consulate are vanished, and the language of Rome is no longer spoken on the shores of the Tiber.

> Still green with bays each ancient altar stands,
> Above the reach of sacrilegious hands;
> Secure from flames, from envy's fiercer rage,
> Destructive war and all-involving age.
> See from each clime the learn'd their incense bring,
> Hear in all tongues consenting Pæans ring!

It is owing to the preservation of a few books of the kind we are speaking of, that at the revival of letters the world had not to go back to the very beginnings of science. When the storm of barbaric rage had passed over and spent itself, they were drawn from the mould of ruins and dust of convents, and were of essential service in forming our taste and giving a direction to the recovered energies of the human mind. Oral instruction can benefit but one age and one set of hearers; but these silent teachers address all ages and all nations. They may sleep for a while and be neglected; but whenever the desire of information springs up in the human breast, there they are with their mild wisdom ready to instruct and please us. The Philosopher opens again his school; his maxims have lost nothing of their truth: the harmony of the Poet's numbers, though locked up for a time, becomes again vocal; and we find that what was nature and passion two thousand years ago, is nature and passion still.

Books are a kind of perpetual censors on men and manners; they judge without partiality, and reprove without fear or affection. There are times when the flame of virtue and liberty seems almost to be extinguished amongst the existing generation; but their animated pages are always at hand to rekindle it. The Despot trembles on his throne, and the bold bad man turns pale in his closet at the sentence pronounced against him ages before he was born.

In addition to their intrinsic value, there is much incidental entertainment in consulting authors who flourished at so remote a period. Every little circumstance becomes curious as we discover allusions to customs now obsolete, or draw indications of the temper of the times from the various slight hints and casual pieces of information which may be gathered up by the ingenious critic. Sometimes we have the pleasure of being admitted into the cabinet of a great man, and leaning as it were over his shoulder while he is pouring himself out in the freedom of a confidential intercourse which was never meant to meet the eye even of his contemporaries. At another time we are delighted to witness the conscious triumph of a genius who, with a generous confidence in his powers, prophecies his own immortality, and to feel as we read that his proud boast has not been too presumptuous. Another advantage of reading the ancients is, that we trace the stream of ideas to their spring. It is always best to go to the fountain head. We can never have a just idea of the comparative merit of the moderns, without knowing how much they have derived from imitation. It is amusing to follow an idea from century to century, and observe the gradual accession of thought and sentiment; to see the jewels

of the ancients new set, and the wit of Horace sparkling with additional lustre in the lines of Pope.

The real sources of History can only be known by some acquaintance with the original authors. This indeed will often be found to betray the deficiency of our documents, and the difficulty of reconciling jarring accounts. It will sometimes unclothe and exhibit in its original bareness what the art of the moderns has drest up and rounded into form. It will show the unsightly chasms and breaks which the modern compiler passes over with a light foot; and perhaps make us sceptical with regard to many particulars of which we formerly thought we had authentic information. But it is always good to know the real measure of our knowledge. That knowledge would be greater, if the treasures of antiquity had come to us undiminished: but this is not the case. Besides the loss of many mentioned with honour by their contemporaries, few authors are come down to us entire; and of some exquisite productions only fragments are extant. The full stream of narration is sometimes suddenly checked at the most interesting period, and the sense of a brilliant passage is clouded by the obscurity of a single word. The literary productions are come to us in a similar state with the fine statues of antiquity: of which some have lost an arm, others a leg; some a little finger only: scarce any have escaped some degree of mutilation; and sometimes a trunk is dug up so shorn of its limbs, that the antiquaries are puzzled to make out to what god or hero it originally belonged. To the frequent loss of part of an author must be added the difficulty of deciphering what remains.

Ancient manuscripts are by no means easy to read. You are not to imagine, when you see a fair edition of Virgil, or Horace, divided into verses and accurately pointed, that you see it in any thing like its original state. The oldest manuscripts are written wholly in capitals, and without any separation of letters into words. Passing through many hands, they have suffered from the mistakes or carelessness of transcribers; by which so great an obscurity is thrown on many passages, that very often he who makes the happiest guess is the best commentator. But this very obscurity has usefully exercised the powers of the human mind. It became a great object, at the revival of letters, to compare different readings; to elucidate a text by parallel passages; to supply by probable conjecture what was necessary to make an author speak sense; and by every possible assistance of learning and sound criticism, together with typographical advantages, to restore the beauty and splendour of the classic page. Verbal criticism was at that time of great and real use; and those who are apt to undervalue it, are little aware how much labour was requisite to reduce the confused or mutilated work of a thousand years back to form and order.

This task was well fitted for an age recently emerged out of barbarism. The enthusiastic admiration with which men were struck on viewing the master-pieces of human genius, and even the superstitious veneration with which they regarded every thing belonging to them, tended to form their taste by a quicker process than if they had been left to make the most of their own abilities. By degrees the moderns felt their own powers; they learned to imitate, and perhaps to excell what before they

idolized. But a considerable period had passed before any of the modern languages were thought worthy of being the vehicle of the discoveries of science or even of the effusions of fancy. Christianity did not as might have been expected, bring into discredit the pagan philosophy. Aristotle reigned in the schools, where he was regarded with a veneration fully equal to what was expressed for the sainted fathers of the church; and as to the mythology of the ancients, it is so beautiful that all our earlier poetry has been modeled upon it. Even yet, the predilection for the Latin language is apparent in our inscriptions, in the public exercises of our schools and universities, and the general bent of the studies of youth. In short, all our knowledge and all our taste has been built upon the foundation of the ancients; and without knowing what they have done, we cannot estimate rightly the merit of our own authors.

It may naturally be asked why the Greek and Roman writers alone are called by the name of Classics. It is true the Hebrew might be esteemed so, if we did not receive them upon a higher ground of merit. As to the Persian and Arabic with other languages of countries once highly cultivated, their authors are not taken into the account, partly because they are understood by so few, and partly because their idioms and modes of expression, if not of feeling, are so remote from ours that we can scarcely enter into their merits. Their writings are comprehended under the name of Oriental literature. It has been more cultivated of late, particularly by Sir William Jones; and our East India possessions will continue to draw our attention that way: but curiosity is gratified rather than taste. We are pleased indeed with occasional

beauties, sometimes a pure maxim of morality and sometimes a glowing figure of speech; but they do not enter into the substance of the mind, which ever must be fed and nourished by the classic literature of Greece and Rome.

I shall subjoin a few specimens of the mythological stories of the ancients.

ATALANTA.

Atalanta was a beautiful young woman, exceedingly swift of foot. She had many lovers; but she resolved not to marry till she could meet with one who should conquer her in running. A great many young men proposed themselves, and lost their lives; for the conditions were, that if they were overcome in the race they should be put to death. At length she was challenged by Hippomenes, a brave and handsome youth. "Do you know," said Atalanta, "that nobody has yet been found who excells me in swiftness, and that you must be put to death if you do not win the race? I should be sorry to have any more young men put to death."—"I am not afraid," said Hippomenes; "I think I shall win the race and win you too."

So the ground was marked out and the day appointed, and a great number of spectators gathered together; and Atalanta stood with her garments tucked up, and Hippomenes by her, waiting impatiently for the signal. At length it was given; and immediately they both started at the same instant, and ran with their utmost speed across

the plain. But Atalanta flew like the wind, and soon outstripped the young man. Then Hippomenes drew from his vest a golden apple, which had been given him by Venus from the gardens of the Hesperides, and threw it from him with all his force. The virgin saw it glittering as it rolled across the plain, and ran out of the course to pick it up. While she was doing so, Hippomenes passed her, and the spectators shouted for joy. However, Atalanta redoubled her speed, soon overtook Hippomenes, and again got before him. Upon this, Hippomenes produced another golden apple, and threw it as before. It rolled a great way out of the course, and the virgin was thrown very far behind by picking it up. She had great difficulty this time to recover her lost ground, and the spectators shouted "Hippomenes will win! Hippomenes will win!" But Atalanta was so light, so nimble, and exerted herself so much, that at length she passed him as before, and flew as if she had wings towards the goal. And now she had but a little way to run; and the people said, "Poor Hippomenes! he will lose after all, and be put to death like the rest;—see, see how she gains ground of him! how near the goal she is! Atalanta will win the race." Then Hippomenes took another golden apple,—it was the last he had, and prayed to Venus to give him success, and threw it behind him. Atalanta saw it, and considered a moment whether she should venture to delay herself again by picking it up. She knew she ran the risk of losing the race, but she could not withstand the beautiful glittering of the apple as it rolled along; and she said to herself, "I shall easily overtake Hippomenes, as I did before." But she was mistaken; for they had now so little a way to run, that though she skimmed along

the plain like a bird, and exerted all her strength, she was too late. Hippomenes reached the goal before her: she was obliged to own herself conquered, and to marry him according to the agreement.

ARION.

Arion was a poet of Lesbos, who sung his own verses to his harp. He had been a good while at the court of Periander tyrant of Corinth, and had acquired great riches, with which he was desirous to return to his native country. He therefore made an agreement with a captain of a ship to carry him to Mitylene in Lesbos, and they set sail. But the captain and crew, tempted by the wealth which he had on board, determined to seize his gold and throw him into the sea. When poor Arion heard their cruel intention, he submitted to his fate, for he knew he could not resist, and only begged they would allow him to give them one tune upon his harp before he died. This they complied with; and Arion, standing on the deck, drew from his harp such melodious strains, accompanied with such moving verses, that any body but these cruel sailors would have been touched with them. When he had finished they threw him into the sea, where they supposed he was swallowed up: but that was not the case; for a dolphin, which had been drawn towards the ship by the sweetness of Arion's voice, swam to him, took him gently upon his back, conveyed him safely over the waves, and landed him at Tenæra, whence he returned to Periander. Periander was very much surprised to see him come again in

such a forlorn and destitute condition, and asked him the reason. Arion told his story. Periander bade him conceal himself till the sailors should return from their voyage, and he would do him justice. When the ship returned from its voyage, Periander ordered the sailors to be brought before him, and asked them what they had done with Arion. They said he had died during the voyage, and that they had buried him. Then Periander ordered Arion to appear before them in the clothes he wore when they cast him into the sea. At this plain proof of their guilt they were quite confounded, and Periander put them all to death. It is said further, that the dolphin was taken up into the heavens and turned into a constellation.—It is a small constellation, of moderate brightness, and has four stars in the form of a rhombus; you will find it south of the Swan, and a little west of the bright star Alcair.

VENUS AND ADONIS.

The goddess Venus loved Adonis, a mortal. Beautiful Venus loved the beautiful Adonis. She often said to him, "O Adonis! be content to lie crowned with flowers by the fresh fountains, and to feed upon honey and nectar, and to be lulled to sleep by the warbling of birds; and do not expose your life by hunting the tawny lion or the tusky boar, or any savage beast. Take care of that life, which is so dear to Venus!" But Adonis would not listen to her. He loved to rise early in the morning while the dew was upon the grass, and to beat the thickets with his well-trained hounds, whose ears swept the ground. With his

darts he pierced the nimble fawns and the kids with budding horns, and brought home the spoil upon his shoulders. But one day he wounded a fierce bristly boar; the arrow stuck in his side, and made the animal mad with pain: he rushed upon Adonis, and gored his thigh with his sharp tusks. Beautiful Adonis fell to the ground like a lily that is rooted up by a sudden storm: his blood flowed in crimson streams down his fair side; and his eyelids closed, and the shades of death hovered over his pale brow.

In the mean time the evening came on, and Venus had prepared a garland of fresh leaves and flowers to bind around the glowing temples of Adonis when he should come hot and tired from the chase, and a couch of rose-leaves to rest his weary limbs: and she said, "Why does not Adonis come! Return Adonis! let me hear the sound of your feet! let me hear the voice of your dogs! let them lick my hands, and make me understand that their master is approaching!"—But Adonis did not return; and the dark night came, and the rosy morning appeared again, and still he did not appear. Then Venus sought him in the plains and through the thickets, and amidst the rough brakes; and her veil was torn with the thorns, and her feet bruised and bleeding with the sharp pebbles; for she ran hither and thither like a distracted person. And at length upon the mountain she found him whom she loved so dearly: but she found him cold and dead, with his faithful dogs beside him.

Then Venus rent her beautiful tresses, and beat her breast, and pierced the air with her loud lamentations: and the little Cupids that accompany her broke their ivory bows for grief, and scattered upon the ground the arrows of their golden quivers: and they said, "We mourn

Adonis; Venus mourns for beautiful Adonis; the Loves mourn along with her. Beautiful Adonis lies dead upon the ground, his side gored with the tooth of a boar,—his white thigh with a white tooth. Venus kisses the cold lips of Adonis; but Adonis does not know that he is kissed, and she cannot revive him with her warm breath."

Then Venus said, "You shall not quite die, my Adonis! I will change you into a flower." And she shed nectar on the ground, which mixed with the blood, and presently a crimson flower sprung up in the room of Adonis; and also the river was tinged with his blood and became red.

And every year, on the day that Adonis died, the nymphs mourned and lamented for him, and ran up and down shrieking, and crying "Beautiful Adonis is dead!"

LETTER OF A YOUNG KING.

MADAM,

Amidst the mutual compliments and kind wishes which are universally circulated at this season, I hope mine will not be the least acceptable; and I have thought proper to give you this early assurance of my kind intentions towards you, and the benefits I have in store for you: for though I am appointed your sovereign; though your fates and fortune, your life and death, are at my disposal; yet I am fully sensible that I was created for my subjects, not my subjects for me; and that the end of my very existence is to diffuse blessings on my people.

My predecessor departed this life last night precisely at twelve o'clock. He died of a universal decay; nature was exhausted in him, and there was not vital heat sufficient to carry on the functions of life; his hair was fallen, and discovered his smooth, white, bald head; his voice was hoarse and broken, and his blood froze in his veins: in short, his time was come. And to say truth he will not be much regretted; for of late he had been gloomy and vapourish, and the sudden gusts of passion he had long been subject to were worked up into such storms it was impossible to live under him with comfort.

With regard to myself, I am sensible the joy expressed at my accession is sincere, and that no young monarch has ever been welcomed with warmer demonstrations of

affection. Some have ardently longed for my coming, and all view my approach with pleasure and cheerfulness; yet such is the uncertainty of popular favour, that I well know that those who are most eager and sanguine in expressing their joy will soonest be tired of my company. You yourself, madam, though I know that at present you regard me with kindness, as one from whom you expect more happiness than you have yet enjoyed, will probably after a short time wish as much to part with me, and transfer the same fond hopes and wishes to my successor. But though your impatience may make me a very troublesome companion, it will not in the least hasten my departure; nor can all the powers of earth oblige me to resign a moment before my time. In order, therefore, that you may form proper expectations concerning me, I shall give you a little sketch of my temper and maners, and I will acknowledge that my aspect at present is somewhat stern and rough; but there is a latent warmth in my temper which you will perceive as we grow better acquainted, and I shall every day put on a milder and more smiling look: indeed I have so much fire, that I may chance sometimes to make the house too hot for you; but in recompense for this inequality of temper I am kind and bountiful as a giving God: I come full-handed, and my very business is to dispense blessings;—blessings of the basket and the store; blessings of the field and of the vineyard; blessings for time and eternity. There is not an inhabitant of the globe who will not experience my bounty; yet such is the ingratitude of mankind, that there is scarcely one whom I shall not leave in some degree discontented.

Whimsical and various are the petitions which are daily put up to me from all parts; and very few of the petitioners will be satisfied; because they reject and despise the gifts I offer them with open hand, and set their minds on others which certainly will not fall to their share. Celia has begged me on her knees to find her a lover: I shall do what I can; I shall bring her the most magnificent shawl that has appeared in Europe. For Dorinda, who has made the same petition, I have two gifts, —wisdom and grey hairs; the former I know she will reject, nor can I force her to wear it; but the grey hairs I shall leave on her toilette, whether she will or no. The curate of Sopron expects I shall bring him a living: I shall present him with twins as round and rosy as an apple. Nor can I listen to the entreaty of Dorimant, whose good father being a little asthmatic, he has desired me to push him into his grave as we walk up May hill together: but I shall marry him to a handsome lively girl, who will make a very pretty stepmother to the young gentleman. It is in vain for poor Sylvia to weary me as she does with prayers to restore to her her faithless lover: but I shall give her the choice of two, to replace him. Codrus has asked me if he may bespeak a suit of black: but I can tell him his little wife will outlive me and him too: I have offered the old man a double portion of patience, which he has thrown away very pettishly. Strephon has entreated me to take him to Scotland with his mistress: I shall do it; and he will hate my very name all his life after.

The wishes of some are very moderate;—Fanny begs two inches of height, and Chloe that I would take away her awkward plumpness; Carus a new equipage, and Philida a new ball-dress. A mother brought me her son

the other day, made me many compliments, and desired me to teach him every thing; at the same time begging the youth to throw away his marbles, which he had often promised to part with as soon as he saw me:—but the boy held them fast, and I shall teach him nothing but to play at taw. Many ladies have come to me with their daughters in their hands, telling me they hope their girls, under me, will learn prudence: but the young ladies have as constantly desired me to teach prudence to their grandmothers, whom it would better become, and to bring them new dances and new fashions. In short, I have scarcely seen any one with whom I am likely entirely to agree, but a stout old farmer who rents a small cottage on the green. He was leaning on his spade when I approached him. As his neighbour told him I was coming, he welcomed me with a cheerful countenance; but at the same time bluntly told me he had not expected me so soon, being too busy to pay much attention to my approach. I asked him if I could do any thing for him. He said he did not believe me better or worse than those who had preceded me, and therefore should not expect much from me; that he was happy before he saw me, and should be very well contented after I left him: he was glad to see me, however, and only begged I would not take his wife from him, a thin withered old woman who was eating a mess of milk at the door. "And I shall be glad too," said he, "if you will fill my cellar with potatoes." As he applied himself to his spade while he said these words, I shall certainly grant his request.

I shall now tell you, that great and extensive as my power is, I shall possess it but a short time. However the predictions of astrologers are now laughed at, nothing is

more certain than what I am going to tell you. A scheme of my nativity has been cast by the most eminent astronomers, who have found, on consulting the stars and the aspect of the heavenly bodies, that Capricornus will be fatal to me: I know that all the physicians in the world cannot protract my life beyond that fatal period. I do not tell you this to excite your sensibility,—for I would have you meet me without fondness and part with me without regret; but to quicken you to lay hold on those advantages I am able to procure you; for it will be your own fault if you are not both wiser and better for my company. I have likewise another request to make to you,—that you will write my epitaph: I may make you happy, but it depends on you to make me famous. If, after I am departed, you can say my reign was distinguished by good actions and wise conversations, and that I have left you happier than I found you, I shall not have lived in vain. My sincere wishes are, that you may long outlive me, but always remember me with pleasure. I am, if you use me well,

Your friend and servant,

THE NEW YEAR.

VERSES

WRITTEN IN

THE LEAVES OF AN IVORY POCKET-BOOK, PRESENTED TO MASTER T*****.

Accept, my dear, this toy; and let me say
The leaves an emblem of your mind display;—
Your youthful mind uncolour'd, fair and white,
Like crystal leaves transparent to the sight,
Fit each impression to receive whate'er
The pencil of Instruction traces there.
O then transcribe into the shining page
Each virtue that adorns your tender age,
And grave upon the tablet of your heart
Each lofty science and each useful art.
But with the likeness mark the difference well,
Nor think complete the hasty parallel:—
The leaves by Folly scrawl'd, or foul with stains,
A drop of water clears with little pains;
But from a blotted mind the smallest trace
Not seas of bitter tears can e'er efface;
The spreading mark for ever shall remain,
And rolling years but deepen every stain.
Once more a difference let me still explain:—
The vacant leaves for ever will remain,

Till some officious hand the tablet fill
With sense or nonsense, prose or rime at will.
Not so your mind, without your forming care;
Nature forbids an idle vacuum there:
Folly will plant the tares without your toil,
And weeds spring up in the neglected soil.
But why to you this moralizing strain?
Vain is the precept, and the caution vain,
To you, whose opening virtues bloom so fair,
And will reward the prudent planter's care;
As some young tree, by generous juices fed,
Above its fellows lifts its branching head,
Whose proud aspiring shoots incessant rise,
And every day grows nearer to the skies.
Yet, should kind Heaven your opening mind adorn,
And bless your noon of knowledge as your morn;
Yet, were your mind with every science blest,
And every virtue glowing in your breast,
With learning meekness, and with candour zeal,
Clear to discern, and generous to feel;
Yet, should the Graces o'er your breast diffuse
The softer influence of the polish'd muse,
'T is no original the world can tell
And all your praise is but to *copy* well.

ON PLANTS.

PLANTS stand next to animals in the scale of existence; they are, like them, organized bodies; like them, increase by nutrition, which is conveyed through a system of tubes and fine vessels, and assimilated to their substance; like them, they propagate their race from a parent, and each seed produces its own plant; like them, they grow by insensible degrees from an infant state to full vigour, and after a certain term of maturity decay and die. In short, except the powers of speech and locomotion, they seem to possess every characteristic of sentient life.

A plant consists of a root, a stem, leaves, and a flower or blossom.

The root is bulbous, as the onion; long, like the parsnip or carrot; or branched out into threads, as the greater number are, and particularly all the large ones;—a bulbous root could not support a large tree.

The stem is single or branched, clinging for support or upright, clothed with a skin or bark.

The flower contains the principle of reproduction, as the root does of individuality. This is the most precious part of the plant, to which every thing contributes. The root nourishes it, the stem supports, the leaves defend and shelter it: it comes forth but when Nature has pre-

pared for it by showers and sun and gentle soothing warmth;—colour, beauty, scent adorn it; and when it is complete, the end of the plant's existence is answered. It fades and dies; or, if capable by its perennial nature of repeating the process, it hides in its inmost folds the precious germ of new being, and itself almost retires from existence till a new year.

A tree is one of the most stately and beautiful objects in God's visible creation. It does not admit of an exact definition, but is distinguished from the humbler plant by its size, the strength of its stem, which becomes a trunk, and the comparative smallness of the blossom. In the fruit-trees, indeed, the number of blossoms compensates for their want of size; but in the forest-trees the flower is scarcely visible. Production seems not to be so important a process where the parent tree lives for centuries.

Every part of vegetables is useful. Of many the roots are edible, and the seeds are generally so; of many the leaves, as of the cabbage, spinach; the buds, as of the asparagus, cauliflower; the bark is often employed medicinally, as the quinquina and cinnamon.

The trunk of a tree determines the manner of its growth, and gives firmness: the foliage serves to form one mass of a number of trees; while the distinct lines are partly seen, partly hidden. The leaves throw over the branches a rich mantle, like flowing tresses; they wave in the wind with an undulatory motion, catch the glow of the evening sun, or glitter with the rain; they shelter innumerable birds and animals, and afford variety in colours, from the bright green of spring to the varied tints of autumn. In winter, however, the form of each

tree and its elegant ramifications are discerned, which were lost under the flowing robe of verdure.

Trees are beautiful in all combinations: the single tree is so; the clump, the grove, rising like an amphitheatre; the flowing line that marks the skirts of wood and the dark, deep, boundless shade of the forest; the green line of the hedge-row, the more artificial avenue, the Gothic arch of verdure, the tangled thicket.

Young trees are distinguished by beauty, in maturity their characteristic is strength. The ruin of a tree is venerable even when fallen: we are then more sensible of its towering height: we also observe the root, the deep fangs which held it against so many storms, and the firmness of the wood; a sentiment of pity mixes too with our admiration. The trees in groves and woods shed a brown religious horror, which favoured the religion of the ancient world. Trees shelter from cutting winds and sea air; they preserve moisture: but if too many, in their thick and heavy mass lazy vapours stagnate; their profuse perspiration is unwholesome; they shut out the golden sun and ventilating breeze.

It should seem as if the number of trees must have been diminishing for ages, for in no cultivated country does the growth of trees equal the waste of them. A few gentlemen raise plantations, but many more cut down; and the farmer thinks not of so lofty a thing as the growth of ages. Trees are too lofty to want the hand of man. The florist may mingle his tulips and spread the paper ruff on his carnations; he may trim his mount of roses and his laurel hedge: but the lofty growth of trees soars far above him. If he presumes to fashion

them with his shears, and trim them into fanciful or mathematical shapes, offended taste will mock all his improvements. Even in planting he can do little. He may succeed in fancying a clump or laying out an avénue, and may perhaps gently incline the boughs to form the arch ; but a forest was never planted.

ON A PORTRAIT

OF

A LADY AND TWO CHILDREN.

As nursed by warmer suns and milder showers
In fair Italia's vales the orange blows;
Heavy at once with fruit and gay with flowers,
The richness of the year she all together shows:

Thus, ere the blossom of her youth is o'er,
Two smiling infants grace Maria's side;
More lovely fruit than all Pomona's store,
Her ruddy orchards, or her golden pride.

Less fair, twin apples blushing on a bough,
On whose smooth cheek the ripening summer glows,
Or those which broke fleet Atalanta's vow,
Or that, from whence celestial strife arose.

Long may the stock, and long the fruit remain,
May their young fondness with their years increase,
Nor ever words unkind, or bitter pain,
Wound the sweet bosom of domestic peace.

And when, late time, the mother's bloom must fade,
And when the sire shall be by fate removed;
May these their name, their form, their virtues spread,
Like them be happy, and like them be loved.

EARTH.

All the different substances which we behold have by the earliest philosophers been resolved into four elements,—*Earth*, *Water*, *Air*, and *Fire*. These, combined with endless diversity, in their various dance, under the direction of the great First Mover, form this scene of things,—so complex, so beautiful, so infinitely varied!

Earth is the element which on many accounts claims our chief notice. It forms the bulk of that vast body of matter which composes our globe; and, like the bones to the human body, it gives firmness, shape, and solidity to the various productions of Nature. It is ponderous, dull, unanimated, ever seeking the lowest place; and, except moved by some external impulse, prone to rest in one sluggish mass. Yet when fermented into life by the quickening power of vegetation,—in how many forms of grace and beauty does it rise to the admiring eye! How gay, how vivid with colours! how fragrant with smells! how rich with tastes,—luscious, poignant, sapid, mild, pungent, or saccharine! Into what delicate textures is it spread out in the thin leaf of the rose, or the light film of the floating gossamer! How curious in the elegant ramifications of trees and shrubs, or the light dust which the microscope discovers to contain the seed of future plants.

Nor has Earth less of magnificence, in the various appearances with which upon a larger scale its broad

surface is diversified;—whether we behold it stretched out into immense plains and vast savannahs, whose level green is only bounded by the horizon; or moulded into those gentle risings and easy declivities whose soft and undulating lines court the pencil of the landscape-painter; or whether, swelled into bulk enormous, it astonishes the eye with vast masses of solid rock and long-continued bulwarks of stone. Such are the Pyrenees, the Alps, the Andes, which stand the everlasting boundaries of nations; and, while kingdoms rise and fall, and the lesser works of nature change their appearance all around them, immoveable on their broad basis, strike the mind with an idea of stability little short of eternal duration.

If from the mountains which possess the middle of Earth we bend our course to the green verge of her dominions, the utmost limits of her shores, where land and water, like two neighbouring potentates, wage eternal war,—with what steady majesty does she repel the encroachments of the ever-restless ocean, and dash the turbulence of waves from her strong-ribbed sides!

Nor do thy praises end here:—With a kind of filial veneration I hail thee, O universal mother of all the elements,—to man the most mild, the most beneficent, the most congenial! Man himself is formed from thee: on thy maternal breast he reposes when weary; thy teeming lap supplies him with never-failing plenty: and when for a few years he has moved about upon thy surface, he is gathered again to thy peaceful bosom, at once his nurse, his cradle, and his grave.

Who can reckon up the benefits supplied to us by this parent Earth,—ever serviceable, ever indulgent! with how many productions does she reward the labour of the

cultivator! how many more does she pour out spontaneously! How faithfully does she keep, with large interest does she restore, the seed committed to her by the husbandman! What an abundance does she yield, of food for the poor, of delicacies for the rich! Her wealth is inexhaustible; and all that is called riches amongst men consists in possessing a small portion of her surface.

How patiently does she support the various burdens laid upon her! We tear her with ploughs and harrows, we crush her with castles and palaces; nay we penetrate her very bowels, and bring to light the veined marble, the pointed crystal, the ponderous ores and sparkling gems, deep hid in darkness the more to excite the industry of man. Yet, torn and harassed as she might seem to be, our mother Earth is still fresh and young, as if she but now came out of the hands of her Creator. Her harvests are as abundant, her horn of plenty as overflowing, her robe as green, her unshorn tresses (the waving foliage of brown forests) as luxuriant; and all her charms as blooming and full of vigour. Such she remains, and such we trust she will remain, till in some fated hour the more devouring element of fire, having broke the bonds of harmonious union, shall seize upon its destined prey, and all nature sink beneath the mighty ruin.

ON THE USES OF HISTORY.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR LYDIA,

I WAS told the other day that you have not forgotten a promise of mine to correspond with you upon some subjects which might be worth discussing, and relative to your pursuits. I have often recollected it also; and as promises ought not only to be recollected but fulfilled, I will without further preface throw together some thoughts on *History*,—a study that I know you value as it deserves; and I trust it will not be disagreeable to you, if you should find some observations which your own mind may have suggested, or which you may recollect to have heard from me in some of those hours which we spent together with mutual pleasure.

Much has been said of the uses of history. They are no doubt many, yet do not apply equally to all: but it is quite sufficient to make it a study worth our pains and time, that it satisfies the desire which naturally arises in every intelligent mind to know the transactions of the country, of the globe in which he lives. Facts, as facts, interest our curiosity and engage our attention.

Suppose a person placed in a part of the country where he was a total stranger; he would naturally ask, who are the chief people of the place, what family they are of, whether any of their ancestors have been famous,

and for what. If he see a ruined abbey, he will inquire what the building was used for; and if he be told it is a place where people got up at midnight to sing psalms, and scourged themselves in the day,—he will ask how there came to be such people, or why there are none now. If he observes a dilapidated castle which appears to have been battered by violence, he will ask in what quarrel it suffered, and why they built formerly structures so different from any we see now. If any part of the inhabitants should speak a different language from the rest, or have some singular customs among them, he would suppose they came originally from some remote part of the country, and would inform himself, if he could, of the cause of their peculiarities.

If he were of a curious temper, he would not rest till he had informed himself who every estate in the parish belonged to, what hands they had gone through; how one man got this field by marrying an heiress, and the other lost that meadow by a ruinous lawsuit. As a man of spirit, he would feel delighted on hearing the relation of the opposition made by an honest yeoman to an overbearing rich man on the subject of an accustomed pathway or right of common. If he should find the town or village divided into parties, he would take some pains to trace the original cause of their dissension, and to find out, if possible, who had the right on his side. Circumstances would often occur to excite his attention. If he saw a bridge, he would ask when and by whom it was built. If in digging in his garden he should find utensils of a singular form and construction, or a pot of money with a stamp and legend quite different from the common coin, he would be led to inquire when they were in use,

and to whom they had belonged. His curiosity would extend itself by degrees. If a brook ran through the meadows, he would be pleased to trace it till it swelled into a river, and the river till it lost itself in the sea. He would be asking whose seat he saw upon the edge of a distant forest, and what sort of country lay behind the range of hills that bounded his utmost view. If any strangers came to visit or reside in the place where he lived, he would be questioning them about the country they came from, their connexions and alliances, and the remarkable transactions that had taken place within their memory or that of their parents. The answers to these questions would insensibly grow up into *History*, which, as you see, does not originate in abstruse speculation, but grows naturally out of our situation and relative connexions. It gratifies a curiosity which all feel in some degree, but which spreads and enlarges itself with the cultivation of our powers, till at length it embraces the whole globe which we inhabit. To know is as natural to the mind as to see is to the eye, and knowledge is itself an ultimate end. But though this may be esteemed an ultimate and sufficient end, the study of history is important to various purposes. Few pursuits tend more to enlarge the mind. It gives us, and it only can give us, an extended knowledge of human nature;—not human nature as it exists in one age or climate or particular spot of earth, but human nature under all the various circumstances by which it can be affected. It shows us what is radical and what is adventitious; it shows us that man is still man in Turkey and in Lapland, as a vassal in Russia or a member of a wandering tribe in India, in ancient Athens or modern Rome; yet that his character

is susceptible of violent changes, and becomes moulded into infinite diversities by the influence of government, climate, civilization, wealth, and poverty. By showing us how man has acted, it shows us to a certain degree how he will ever act in given circumstances; and general rules and maxims are drawn from it for the service of the law-giver and the statesman.

Here I must observe however, with regard to *events*, that a knowledge of history does not seem to give us any great advantage in foreseeing and preparing for them. The deepest politician, with all his knowledge of the revolutions of past ages, could probably no more have predicted the course and termination of the late French revolution, than a common man. The state of our own national debt has baffled calculation, the course of ages has presented nothing like it. Who could have pronounced that the struggle of the Americans would be successful—that of the Poles unsuccessful? Human characters indeed act always alike: but events depend upon circumstances as well as characters; and circumstances are infinitely various and changed by the slightest causes. A battle won or lost may decide the fate of an empire: but a battle may be won or lost by a shower of snow being blown to the east or the west; by a horse (the general's) losing his shoe; by a bullet or an arrow taking a direction a tenth part of an inch one way or the other.—The whole course of the French affairs might have been changed if the king had not stopped to breakfast, or if the postmaster of Varennes had not happened to know him. These are particulars which no man can foresee; and therefore no man can with precision foresee events.

The rising up of certain characters at particular peri-

ods ranks among those unforeseen circumstances that powerfully influence events. Often does a single man, as Epaminondas, illustrate his country, and leave a long track of light after him to future ages. And who can tell how much even America owed to the *accident* of being served by such a man as Washington? There are always many probable events. All that history enables the politician to do, is to predict that one or other of them will take place. If so and so, it will be this; if so and so, it will be that; but which, he cannot tell. There are always combinations of circumstances which have never met before from the creation of the world, and which mock all power of calculation. But let the circumstances be known and the characters upon the stage, and history will tell him what to expect from them. It will tell him with certainty, for instance, that a treaty extorted by force from distress, will be broken when opportunity offers: that if the church and the monarch are united they will oppress, if at variance they will divide the people; that a powerful nation will make its advantage of the divisions of a weaker which applies for its assistance.

It is another advantage of history, that it stores the mind with facts that apply to most subjects which occur in conversation among enlightened people. Whether morals, commerce, languages, polite literature be the object of discussion, it is history that must supply her large storehouse of proofs and illustrations. A man or a woman may decline without blame many subjects of literature, but to be ignorant of history is not permitted to any of a cultivated mind. It may be reckoned among its advantages, that this study naturally increases the love of every man to his country. We can only love what we know;

it is by becoming acquainted with the long line of patriots, heroes, and distinguished men, that we learn to love the country which has produced them.

But I must conclude this letter, already perhaps too long, though I have not got to the end of my subject: it will give me soon another opportunity of subscribing myself

Your ever affectionate friend.

LETTER II.

I LEFT off, my dear Lydia, with mentioning, among the advantages of an acquaintance with history, that it fosters the sentiments of patriotism.

What is a man's country? To the unlettered peasant who has never left his native village, that village is his country, and consequently all of it he can love. The man who mixes in the world, and has a large acquaintance with the characters existing along with himself upon the stage of it, has a wider range. His idea of a country extends to its civil polity, its military triumphs, the eloquence of its courts, and the splendour of its capital. All the great and good characters he is acquainted with swell his idea of its importance, and endear to him the society of which he is a member. But how wonderfully does this idea expand, and how majestic a form does it put on, when History conducts our retrospective view through past ages! How much more has the man to love, how much to interest him in his country, in whom her image is identified with the virtues of an Alfred, with the exploits

of the Henries and Edwards, with the fame and fortunes of the Sidneys and Hampdens, the Lockes and Miltons, who have illustrated her annals! Like a man of noble birth who walks up and down in a long gallery of portraits, and is able to say, "This my progenitor was admiral in such a fight; that my great-uncle was general in such an engagement; he on the right hand held the seals in such a reign; that lady in so singular a costume was a celebrated beauty two hundred years ago; this little man in the black cap and peaked beard was one of the luminaries of his age, and suffered for his religion;"—he learns to value himself upon his ancestry, and to feel interested for the honour and prosperity of the whole line of descendants. Could a Swiss, think you, be so good a patriot who had never heard of the name of William Tell? or the Hollander, who should be unacquainted with the glorious struggle which freed his nation from the tyranny of the Duke of Alva?

The Englishman conversant in history has been long acquainted with his country. He knew her in the infancy of her greatness; has seen her, perhaps, in the wattled huts and slender canoes in which Cæsar discovered her: he has watched her rising fortunes, has trembled at her dangers, rejoiced at her deliverances, and shared with honest pride triumphs that were celebrated ages before he was born. He has traced her gradual improvement through many a dark and turbulent period, many a storm of civil warfare, to the fair reign of her liberty and law, to the fulness of her prosperity and the amplitude of her fame.

Or should our patriot have his lot cast in some age and country which has declined from this high station of

pre-eminence; should he observe the gathering glooms of superstition and ignorance ready to close again over the bright horizon; should Liberty lie prostrate at the feet of a despot, and the golden stream of commerce, diverted into other channels, leave nothing but beggary and wretchedness around him;—even then, in these ebbing fortunes of his country, History like a faithful meter would tell him how high the tide had once risen; he would not tread unconsciously the ground where the Muses and the Arts had once resided, like the goat that stupidly browses upon the fane of Minerva. Even the name of his country will be dear and venerable to him. He will muse over her fallen greatness, sit down under the shade of her never-dying laurels, build his little cottage amidst the ruins of her towers and temples, and contemplate with tenderness and respect the decaying age of his once illustrious parent.

But if an acquaintance with history thus increases a rational love of our country, it also tends to check those low, illiberal, vulgar prejudices which adhere to the uninformed of every nation. Travelling will also cure them: but to travel is not within the power of every one. There is no use, but a great deal of harm in fostering a contempt for other nations; in an arrogant assumption of superiority, and the clownish sneer of ignorance at every thing in laws, government or manners which is not fashioned after our partial ideas and familiar usages. A well-informed person will not be apt to exclaim at every event out of the common way, that nothing like it has ever happened since the creation of the world, that such atrocities are totally unheard-of in any age or nation;—sentiments we have all of us so often heard of late on the subject of the French revolution: when in fact

we can scarcely open a page of their history without being struck with similar and equal enormities. Indeed party spirit is very much cooled and checked by an acquaintance with the events of past times.

When we see the mixed and imperfect virtue of the most distinguished characters; the variety of motives, some pure and some impure, which influence political conduct; the partial success of the wisest schemes, and the frequent failure of the fairest hopes;—we shall find it more difficult to choose a side, and to keep up an interest towards it in our minds, than to restrain our feelings and language within the bounds of good sense and moderation. This, by the way, makes it particularly proper that *ladies* who interest themselves in the events of public life should have their minds cultivated by an acquaintance with history, without which, they are apt to let the whole warmth of their natures flow out, upon party matters, in an ardour more honest than wise, more zealous than candid.

With regard to the moral uses of history, what has just been mentioned may stand for one. It serves also by exercise to strengthen the moral feelings. The traits of generosity, heroism, disinterestedness, magnanimity, are scattered over it like sparkling gems, and arrest the attention of the most common reader. It is wonderfully interesting to follow the revolutions of a great state, particularly when they lead to the successful termination of some glorious contest. Is it true?—a child asks, when you tell him a wonderful story that strikes his imagination. The writer of fiction has the unlimited command of events and of characters; yet that single circumstance of truth, that the events related really came to pass, that the heroes

brought upon the stage really existed,—counterbalances. with respect to interest, all the privileges of the former, and in a mind a little accustomed to exertion will throw the advantage on the side of the historian.

The more History approaches to Biography the more interest it excites. Where the materials are meagre and scanty, the antiquarian and the chronologer may dwell upon the page; but it will seldom excite the glow of admiration or draw the delicious tear of sensibility. I must acknowledge however, in order to be candid, that the emotions excited by the actions of our species are not always of so pleasing or so edifying a nature. The miseries and the vices of man form a large part of the picture of human society: the pure mind is disgusted by depravity, the existence of which it could not have imagined to itself; and the feeling heart is cruelly lacerated by the sad repetition of wrongs and oppression, chains and slaughter, sack and massacre, which assail it in every page:—till the mind has gained some strength, so frightful a picture should hardly be presented to it. Chosen periods of history may be selected for youth, as the society of chosen characters precedes in well-regulated education a more indiscriminate acquaintance with the world. In favour of a more extended view, I can only say that truth is truth,—man must be shown as the being he really is, or no real knowledge is gained. If a young person were to read only the *Beauties of History*, or, according to Madame Genlis' scheme, stories and characters in which all that was vicious should be left out, he might as well for any real acquaintance with life he would gain, have been reading all the while Sir Charles Grandison or the Princess of Cleves.

One consoling idea will present itself with no small degree of probability on comparing the annals of past and present times,—that of a tendency to amelioration; at least it is evidently found in those countries with which we are most connected. But the only balm that can be poured with full effect into the feeling mind which bleeds for the folly and wickedness of man is the belief that all events are directed and controlled by supreme wisdom and goodness. Without this persuasion, the world becomes a desert, and its devastators the wolves and tigers that prowl over it.

It is needless to insist on the uses of history to those whose situation in life gives them room to expect that their actions may one day become the objects of it. Besides the immediate necessity to them of the knowledge it supplies, it affords the strongest motives for their conduct of hope and fear. The solemn award, the incorruptible tribunal and the severe soul-searching inquisition of Posterity is calculated to strike an awe into their souls. They cannot take refuge in oblivion: it is not permitted them to die:—they may be the objects of gratitude or detestation as long as the world stands. They may flatter themselves that they have silenced the voice of truth; they may forbid newspapers and pamphlets and conversation;—an unseen hand is all the while tracing out their history, and often their minutest actions, in indelible characters; and it will soon be held up for the judgement of the world at large.

Lastly, this permanency of human characters tends to cherish in the mind the hope and belief of an existence after death. If we had no notices from the page of history of those races of men that have lived before us, they

would seem to be completely swept away; and we should no more think of inquiring what human beings filled our places upon the earth a thousand harvests ago, than we should think about the generations of cattle which at that time grazed the marshes of the Tiber, or the venerable ancestors of the goats that are browsing upon Mount Hymettus;—no vestige would remain of one any more than of the other, and we might more pardonably fall into the opinion that they both had shared a similar fate. But when we see illustrious characters continuing to live on in the eye of posterity, their memories still fresh, and their noble actions shining with all the vivid colouring of truth and reality, ages after the very dust of their tombs is scattered, high conceptions kindle within us; and feeling one immortality, we are led to hope for another. We find it hard to persuade ourselves that the man who, like Antoninus or Socrates, fills the world with the sweet perfume of his virtue, the martyr or the patriot to whom posterity is doing the justice which was denied him by his contemporaries, should all the while himself be blotted out of existence, that he should be benefitting mankind and doing good so long after he is capable of receiving any, that we should be so well acquainted with him, and that he should never know any thing of us. That one who is an active agent in the world, instructing, informing it, inspiring friendship, making disciples, should be nothing—this does not seem probable; the records of time suggest to us eternity.—Farewell.

LETTER III.

MY DEAR LYDIA,

We have considered the uses of History; I would now direct your attention to those collateral branches of science which are necessary for the profitable understanding of it. It is impossible to understand one thing well without understanding to a certain degree many other things; there is a mutual dependence between all parts of knowledge. This is the reason that a child never fully comprehends what he is taught: he receives an idea, but not the full idea, perhaps not the principal of what you want to teach him. But as his mind opens, this idea enlarges and receives accessory ideas, till slowly and by degrees he is master of the whole. This is particularly the case in History. You may recollect probably that the mere *adventure* was all you entered into, in those portions of it which were presented to you at a very early age. You could understand nothing of the springs of action, nothing of the connexion of events with the intrigues of cabinets, with religion, with commerce; nothing of the state of the world at different periods of society and improvement: and as little could you grasp the measured distances of time and space which are set between them. This you could not do, not because the history was not related with clearness, but because you were destitute of other knowledge.

The first studies which present themselves as accessories in this light are *Geography* and *Chronology*, which have been called the two eyes of History. When was it done? Where was it done? are the two first questions

you would ask concerning any fact that was related to you. Without these two particulars there can be no precision or clearness.

Geography is best learned along with history; for if the first explains history, the latter gives interest to geography, which without it is but a dry list of names. For this reason if a young person begin with ancient history, I should think it adviseable, after a slight general acquaintance with the globe, to confine his geography to the period and country of which he is reading; and it would be a desirable thing to have maps adapted to each remarkable period in the great empires of the world. These should not contain any towns or be divided into any provinces which were not known at that period. A map of Egypt for instance, calculated for its ancient monarchy, should have Memphis marked on it, but not Alexandria, because the two capitals did not exist together. A map of Judea for the time of Solomon, or any period of its monarchy, should not exhibit the name of Samaria, nor the villages of Bethany and Nazareth: but each country should have the towns and divisions, as far as they are known, calculated for the period the map was meant to illustrate. Thus geography, civil geography, would be seen to grow out of history; and the mere view of the map would suggest the political state of the world at any period.

It would be a pleasing speculation to see how the arbitrary divisions of kingdoms and provinces vary, and become obsolete, and large towns flourish and fall again into ruins; while the great natural features, the mountains, rivers, and seas remain unchanged, by whatever names we please to call them, whatever empire incloses them

within its temporary boundaries. We have, it is true, ancient and modern maps; but the one set includes every period from the Flood to the provinciating the Roman empire under Trajan, and the other takes in all the rest. About half a dozen sets for the ancient states and empires, and as many for the modern, would be sufficient to exhibit the most important changes, and would be as many as we should be able to give with any clearness. The young student should make it an invariable rule never to read history without a map before him; to which should be added plans of towns, harbours, &c. These should be conveniently placed under the eye, separate if possible from the book he is reading, that by frequent glancing upon them the image of the country may be indelibly impressed on his imagination.

Besides the necessity of maps for understanding history, the memory is wonderfully assisted by the local association which they supply. The battles of Issus and the Granicus will not be confounded by those who have taken the pains to trace the rivers on whose banks they were fought: the exploits of Hannibal are connected with a view of the Alps, and the idea of Leonidas is inseparable from the straits of Thermopylæ. The greater accuracy of maps, and still more the facility, from the arts of printing and engraving, of procuring them, is an advantage the moderns have over the ancients. They have been perfected by slow degrees. The Egyptians and Chaldeans studied the science of mensuration; and the first map—rude enough no doubt—is said to have been made by order of Sesostris when he became master of Egypt. Commerce and war have been the two parents of this science. Pharaoh Necho ordered the Phœnicians

whom he sent round Africa, to make a survey of the coast. This they finished in three years. Darius caused the Ethiopic Sea and the mouth of the Indus to be surveyed. That maps were known in Greece you no doubt recollect from the pretty story of Socrates and Alcibiades. Anaximander, a disciple of Thales, is said to have made the first sphere, and first delineated what was then known of the countries of the earth. He flourished 547 years before Christ. Herodotus mentions a map of brass or copper which was presented by Aristagoras tyrant of Miletus to Cleomenes king of Sparta, in which he had described the known world with its seas and rivers. Alexander the Great in his expedition into Asia took two geographers with him; and from their itineraries many things have been copied by succeeding writers.

From Greece the science of geography passed to Rome. The enlightened policy of the Romans cultivated it as a powerful means of extending and securing their dominion. One of the first things they did was to make roads, for which it was necessary to have the country measured. They had a custom when they had conquered a country to have a painted map of it always carried aloft in their triumphs. The great historian Polybius reconnoitered under a commission from Scipio Emilianus the coasts of Africa, Spain, and France, and measured the distances of Hannibal's march over the Alps and Pyrenees. Julius Cæsar employed men of science to survey and measure the globe; and his own Commentaries show his attention to this part of knowledge. Strabo, a great geographer whose works are extant, flourished under Augustus; Pomponius Mela in the first century.

Many of the Roman itineraries which are still extant, show the systematic care which they bestowed on a science so necessary for the orderly distribution and government of their large dominions. But still it was late before Geography was settled upon its true basis,—astronomical observations. The greater part of the early maps were laid down in a very loose inaccurate manner; and where particular parts were done with the greatest care, yet if the longitude and latitude were wanting, their relative situation to the rest of the earth could not be known. Some attempts had indeed been made by Hipparchus and Possidonius, Greek philosophers, to settle the parallels of latitude by the length of the days; but the foundation they had laid was neglected till the time of Ptolemy, who flourished at Alexandria about 150 years after Christ, under Adrian and Antoninus Pius. This is he from whom the Ptolemaic system took its name. He diligently compared and revised the ancient maps and charts, correcting their errors and supplying their defects by the reports of travellers and navigators, the measured or reputed distances of maps and itineraries, and astronomical calculations, all digested together; he reduced geography to a regular system, and laid down the situation of places according to minutes and degrees of longitude and latitude as we now have them. His maps were in general use till the last three or four centuries, in which time the progress of the moderns in the knowledge of the globe we inhabit has thrown at a great distance all the ancient geographers.

We are now, some few breaks and chasms excepted, pretty well acquainted with the outline of the globe, and with those parts of it with which we are connected

by our commercial or political relations; but we are still profoundly ignorant of the interior of Africa, and imperfectly acquainted with that of South America, and the western part of North America. We know little of Thibet and the central parts of Asia, and have as yet only touched upon the great continent of New Holland.

The best ancient maps are those of D'Anville. It has required great learning and proportionate skill to bring together the scattered notices which are found in various authors, and to fix the position of places which have been long ago destroyed; very often the geographer has no other guide than the relation of the historian that such a place is within six or eight days journey from another place. In some instances the maps of Ptolemy are lately come into repute again,—as in his delineation of the course of the Niger, which is thought to be favoured by modern discoveries. Major Rennel has done much to improve the geography of India.

There are many valuable maps scattered in voyages and travels, and many of the atlases contain a collection sufficient for all common purposes; but a complete collection of the best maps and charts, with plans of harbours, towns, &c., becomes an object of even princely expense. The French took the lead in this, as in some other branches of science. The late empress of Russia caused a geographical survey to be taken of her dominions, which has much improved our knowledge of the north-eastern regions of Europe and Asia. We have now, however, both single maps and atlases which yield to none in accuracy or elegance.

Yours affectionately.

LETTER IV.

DEAR LYDIA,

GEOGRAPHY addresses itself to the eye, and is easily comprehended; to give a clear idea of Chronology is somewhat more difficult. It is easy to define it by saying it gives an answer to the question, when was it done? but the meaning of the *when* is not quite so obvious. A date is a very artificial thing, and the world had existed for a long course of centuries before men were aware of its use and necessity. *When* is a relative term; the most natural application of it is, how long ago, reckoning backwards from the present moment? Thus if you were to ask an Indian when such an event happened, he would probably say—So many harvests ago, when I could but just reach the boughs of yonder tree;—in the time of my father, grandfather, great-grandfather; still making the time then present to him the date from which he sets out. Even where a different method is well understood, we use in more familiar life this natural kind of chronology—The year before I was married,—when Henry, who is now five years old, was born,—the winter of the hard frost. These are the epochs which mark the annals of domestic life more readily and with greater clearness, so far as the real idea of time is concerned, than the year of our Lord, as long as these are all within the circle of our personal recollection. But when events are recorded, the relator may be forgotten, and the *when* again occurs: "When did the historian live? I understand the relative chronology of his narration; I know how the events of it follow one

another; but what is their relation to general chronology, to time as it relates to me and to other events?"

To know the transactions of a particular reign, that of Cyrus for instance, in the regular order in which they happened in that reign, but not to know where to place them with respect to the history of other times and nations, is as if we had a very accurate map of a small island existing somewhere in the boundless ocean, and could lay down all the bearings and distances of its several towns and villages, but for want of its longitude and latitude were ignorant of the relative position of the island itself. Chronology supplies this longitude and latitude, and fixes every event to its precise point in the chart of universal time. It supplies a common measure by which I may compare the relator of an event with myself, and his *now* or *ten years ago* with the present *now* or *ten years*, reckoning from the time in which I live.

In order to find such a common measure, men have been led by degrees to fix upon some one known event, and to make that the center from which, by regular distances, the different periods of time are reckoned, instead of making the present time, which is always varying, and every man's own existence, the center.

The first approach to such a mode of computing time is to date by the reigns of kings; which, being public objects of great notoriety, seem to offer themselves with great advantage for such a purpose. The scripture history, which is the earliest of histories, has no other than this kind of successive dates: "Now it came to pass in the fifth year of the king Hezekiah." "And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years: and Solomon slept with his fathers; and

Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead." From this method a regular chronology might certainly be deduced, if we had the whole unbroken series; but unfortunately there are many gaps and chasms in history; and you easily see that if any links of the chain are wanting, the whole computation is rendered imperfect. Besides, it requires a tedious calculation to bring it into comparison with other histories and events. To say that an event happened in the tenth year of the reign of king Solomon, gives you only an idea of the time relative to the histories of that king, but leaves you quite in the dark as to its relation with the time you live in, or with the events of the Roman history.

We want therefore an universal date, like a lofty obelisk seen by all the country round, from and to which every distance should be measured. The most obvious that offers itself for this purpose is the creation of the world, an event equally interesting to all; to us the beginning of time, and from which therefore time would flow regularly down in an unbroken stream from the earliest to the latest generations of the human race. This would probably therefore have been made use of, if the date of the creation itself could be ascertained with any exactness; but as chronologers differ by more than a thousand years as to the time of that event, it is necessary previously to mention what system is made use of, which renders this æra obscure and inconvenient. It has therefore been found more convenient, in fact, to take some known event within the limit of well-authenticated history, and to reckon from that fixed point backwards and forwards. As we cannot find the head of the river and know not its termination, we must raise a pillar upon its banks, and

measure our distances from that, both up and down the stream. This event ought to be important, conspicuous, and as interesting as possible, that it may be generally received; for it would spare a great deal of trouble in computation if all the world would make use of the same date. This however has never been the case, chance and national vanity having had their full share in settling them.

The Greeks reckoned by olympiads, but not till more than sixty years after the death of Alexander the Great. The Olympic games were the most brilliant assembly in Greece, the Greeks were very fond of them, they began 776 years before Christ, and each olympiad includes four years. Some of the earlier Greek historians digested their histories by ages, or by the succession of the priestesses of Juno at Argos; others by the archons of Athens or the kings of Lacedæmon. Thucydides uses simply the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, the subject of his history; for, writing to his contemporaries, it seems not to have occurred to him that another date would ever be necessary. The Arundelian marbles, composed sixty years after the death of Alexander the Great, reckon backwards from the then present time.

The Roman æra was the building of their city, the eternal city as they loved to call it.

The Mahometans date from the Hegira, or flight of Mahomet from Mecca his birth-place, to Medina, A. D. 622; and they have this advantage, that they began almost immediately to use it.

The æra used all over the Christian world is the birth of Christ. This was adopted as a date about A. D. 360; and though there is an uncertainty of a few years, which

are in dispute, the accuracy is sufficient for any present purpose.

The reign of Nabonassar the first king of Babylon, of Yesdigerd the last king of Persia,—who was conquered by the Saracens,—and of the Seleucidæ of Syria, have likewise furnished æras.

Julius Scaliger formed an æra which he called the *Julian period*, being a cycle of 7980 years, produced by multiplying several cycles into one another, so as to carry us back to a period 764 years before the creation of the world. This æra, standing out of all history, like the fulcrum which Archimedes wished for, and independent of variation or possibility of mistake, was a very grand idea; and in measuring every thing by itself, measured it by the eternal truth of the laws of the heavenly bodies. But it is not greatly employed, the common æra serving all ordinary purposes. In modern histories the olympiads, Roman æras, and others, are reduced, in the margin, to the year of our Lord, or of the creation.

Such is the nature of æras, now in such common use that we can with difficulty conceive the confusion in which, for the want of them, all the early part of history is involved, and the strenuous labours of the most learned men which have been employed in arranging them and reducing history to the order in which we now have it.

The earliest history which we possess, as we have before observed, is that of the Jewish scriptures; these carry us from the creation to about the time of Herodotus: having no date, we are obliged to compute from generations, and to take the reigns of kings where they are given. But a great schism occurs at the very outset. The Septuagint translation of the Mosaic history into Greek,

which was made by order of Ptolemy Philadelphus, differs from the Hebrew text by 1400 years from the creation to the birth of Abraham.

The chronology of the Assyrian and Babylonish monarchies is involved in inextricable difficulties; nor are we successful in harmonizing the Greek with the oriental writers of history. The Persian historians make no mention of the defeat of Xerxes by the Greeks, or that of Darius by Alexander. All nations have had the vanity to make their origin mount as high as possible; and they have often invented series of kings, or have reckoned the contemporary individuals of different dynasties as following each other in regular succession, as if one should take the kings of the Heptarchy singly instead of together.

You will perhaps ask, if we have no æras, what have we to reckon by? We have generations and successions of kings. Sir Isaac Newton, who joined wonderful sagacity to profound learning and astronomical skill, made very great reforms in the ancient chronology. He pointed out the difference between generations and successions of kings. A generation is not the life of man; it is the time that elapses before a man sees his successor; and this, reckoning to the birth of the eldest son, is estimated at about thirty years. The succession of kings would seem at first sight to be the same, and so it had been reckoned; but Newton corrected it, on the principle that kings are often cut off prematurely in turbulent times, or are succeeded either by their brothers, or by their uncles, or others older than themselves. The lines of kings of France, England, and other countries within the range of exact chronology, confirmed this principle. He there-

fore rectified all the ancient chronology according to it; and with the assistance of astronomical observations he found reason to allow, as the average length of a reign, about eighteen or twenty years.

But after all, great part of the chronology of ancient history is founded upon conjecture and clouded with uncertainty.

Although I recommend to you a constant attention to chronology, I do not think it desirable to load your memory with a great number of specific dates, both because it would be too great a burthen on the retentive powers, and because it is, after all, not the best way of attaining clear ideas on the subjects of history. In order to do this, it is necessary to have in your mind the relative situation of other countries at the time of any event recorded in one of them. For instance, if you have got by heart the dates of the accession of the kings of Europe, and want to know whether John lived at the time of the crusades, and in what state the Greek empire was, you cannot tell without an arithmetical process, which perhaps you may not be quick enough to make. You cannot tell whether Constantinople had been taken by the Turks when the Sicilian Vespers happened; for each fact is insulated in your mind; and indeed your dates give you only the dry catalogue of accessions. Nay, you may read separate histories, and yet not bring them together if the countries be remote. Each exists in your mind separately, and you have at no time the state of the world. But you ought to have an idea at once of the whole world, as far as history will give it. You do not see truly what the Greeks were, except you know that the British Isles were then barbarous.

A few dates therefore, perfectly learned, may suffice, and will serve as landmarks to prevent your going far astray in the rest: but it will be highly useful to connect the histories you read in such a manner in your own mind, that you may be able to refer from one to the other, and form them all into a whole. For this purpose, it is very desirable to observe and retain in your memory certain coincidences, which may link, as it were, two nations together. Thus you may remember that Haroun al Raschid sent to Charlemagne the first clock that was seen in Europe. If you are reading the history of Greece when it flourished most, and want to know what the Romans were doing at the same time, you may recollect that they sent to Greece for instruction when they wanted to draw up the laws of the Twelve Tables. Solon and Crœsus connect the history of Lesser Asia with that of Greece. Egbert was brought up in the court of Charlemagne; Philip Augustus of France and Richard I. of England fought in the same crusade against Saladin. Queen Elizabeth received the French ambassador in deep mourning after the massacre of St. Bartholomew.

It may be desirable to keep one kingdom as a meter for the rest. Take for this purpose first the Jews, then the Greek, the Romans, and, because it is so, our own country: then harmonize and connect all the other dates with these.

That the literary history of a nation may be connected with the political, study also biography, and endeavour to link men of science and literature and artists with political characters. Thus Hippocrates was sent for to the plague of Athens; Leonardo da Vinci died in the arms of Francis I. Often an anecdote, a smart saying, will indissolubly fix a date.

Sometimes you may take a long reign, as that of Elizabeth or Louis XIV., and making that the center, mark all the contemporary sovereigns, and also the men of letters. Another way is, to make a line of life, composed of distinguished characters who touch each other. It will be of great service to you in this view to study Dr. Priestley's biographical chart; and of still greater, to make one for yourself, and fill it by degrees as your acquaintance with history extends. Marriages connect the history of different kingdoms; as those of Mary queen of Scots and Francis II., Philip II. and Mary of England.

These are the kind of dates which make every thing lie in the mind in its proper order; they also take fast hold of it. If you forget the exact date by years, you have nothing left; but of circumstances you never lose all idea. As we come nearer to our own times, dates must be more exact: a few years more or less signify little in the destruction of Troy, if we knew it exactly; but the conclusion of the American war should be accurately known, or it will throw other events near it into confusion.

In so extensive a study no auxiliary is to be neglected: Poetry impresses both geography and history in a most agreeable manner upon those who are fond of it. Thus,

> "……fair Austria spreads her mournful charms,
> The queen, the beauty, sets the world in arms."

A short, lively character in verse is never forgotten:

> "From Macedonia's madman to the Swede."

Historic plays deeply impress, but should be read with caution. We take our ideas from Shakespeare more

than history: he, indeed, copied pretty exactly from the chroniclers, but other dramatic writers have taken great liberties both with characters and events.

Painting is a good auxiliary; and though in this country history is generally read before we see pictures, they mutually illustrate one another: painting also shows the costume. In France, where pictures are more accessible, there is more knowledge generally diffused of common history. Many have learned scripture history from the rude figures on Dutch tiles.

I will conclude with the remark, that though the beginner in history may and ought to study dates and epochas for his guidance, chronology can never be fully possessed till after history has been long studied and carefully digested.

Farewell; and believe me

Yours affectionately.

FASHION:

A VISION.

YOUNG as you are, my dear Flora, you cannot but have noticed the eagerness with which questions, relative to civil liberty, have been discussed in every society. To break the shackles of oppression, and assert the native rights of man, is esteemed by many among the noblest efforts of heroic virtue; but vain is the possession of political liberty if there exists a tyrant of our own creation, who, without law or reason, or even external force, exercises over us the most despotic authority; whose jurisdiction is extended over every part of private and domestic life; controls our pleasures, fashions our garb, cramps our motions, fills our lives with vain cares and restless anxiety. The worst slavery is that which we voluntarily impose upon ourselves; and no chains are so cumbrous and galling as those which we are pleased to wear by way of grace and ornament.—Musing upon this idea, gave rise to the following dream or vision:

Methought I was in a country of the strangest and most singular appearance I had ever beheld: the rivers were forced into jet d'eaus, and wasted in artificial water-works; the lakes were fashioned by the hand of art; the roads were sanded with spar and gold-dust; the trees all bore the marks of the shears, they were bent and twisted into the most whimsical forms, and connected together

by festoons of ribbon and silk fringe; the wild flowers were transplanted into vases of fine china, and painted with artificial white and red.

The disposition of the ground was full of fancy, but grotesque and unnatural in the highest degree; it was all highly cultivated, and bore the marks of wonderful industry; but among its various productions I could hardly discern one that was of any use.

My attention, however, was soon called off from the scenes of inanimate life, by the view of the inhabitants, whose form and appearance was so very preposterous, and, indeed, so unlike any thing human, that I fancied myself transported to the country of

> "The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
> Do grow beneath their shoulders:"

for the heads of many of these people were swelled to an astonishing size, and seemed to be placed in the middle of their bodies. Of some, the ears were distended till they hung upon the shoulders; and of others, the shoulders were raised till they met the ears: there was not one free from some deformity, or monstrous swelling, in one part or other; either it was before, or behind, or about the hips, or the arms were puffed up to an unusual thickness, or the throat was increased to the same size with the poor objects once exhibited under the name of the monstrous Craws: some had no necks; others had necks that reached almost to their waists; the bodies of some were bloated up to such a size, that they could scarcely enter a pair of folding doors; and others had suddenly sprouted up to such a disproportionate height, that they could not sit upright in their loftiest carriages.

Many shocked me with the appearance of being nearly

cut in two, like a wasp; and I was alarmed at the sight of a few, in whose faces, otherwise very fair and healthy, I discovered an eruption of black spots, which I feared was the fatal sign of some pestilential disorder.

The sight of these various and uncouth deformities inspired me with much pity; which however was soon changed into disgust, when I perceived, with great surprise, that every one of these unfortunate men and women was exceeding proud of his own peculiar deformity, and endeavoured to attract my notice to it as much as possible. A lady, in particular, who had a swelling under her throat, larger than any goitre in the Valais, and which, I am sure, by its enormous projection, prevented her from seeing the path she walked in, brushed by me with an air of the greatest self-complacency, and asked me if she was not a charming creature?

But by this time I found myself surrounded by an immense crowd, who were all pressing along in one direction; and I perceived that I was drawn along with them by an irresistible impulse, which grew stronger every moment. I asked whither we were hurrying with such eager steps? and was told that we were going to the court of Queen Fashion, the great Diana whom all the world worshippeth. I would have retired, but felt myself impelled to go on, though without being sensible of any outward force.

When I came to the royal presence, I was astonished at the magnificence I saw around me. The queen was sitting on a throne, elegantly fashioned in the form of a shell, and inlaid with gems and mother-of-pearl. It was supported by a camelion, formed of a single emerald. She was dressed in a light robe of changeable silk, which

fluttered about her in a profusion of fantastic folds, that imitated the form of clouds, and like them were continually changing their appearance. In one hand she held a rouge-box, and in the other one of those optical glasses which distort figures in length or in breadth according to the position in which they are held. At the foot of the throne was displayed a profusion of the richest productions of every quarter of the globe, tributes from land and sea, from every animal and plant; perfumes, sparkling stones, drops of pearl, chains of gold, webs of the finest linen; wreaths of flowers, the produce of art, which vied with the most delicate productions of nature; forests of feathers waving their brilliant colours in the air and canopying the throne; glossy silks, net-work of lace, silvery ermine, soft folds of vegetable wool, rustling paper, and shining spangles;—the whole intermixed with pendants and streamers of the gayest tinctured ribbon.

All these together made so brilliant an appearance that my eyes were at first dazzled, and it was some time before I recovered myself enough to observe the ceremonial of the court. Near the throne, and its chief supports, stood the queen's two prime ministers, Caprice on one side, and Vanity on the other. Two officers seemed chiefly busy among the attendants. One of them was a man with a pair of shears in his hand and a goose by his side,—a mysterious emblem, of which I could not fathom the meaning: he sat cross-legged, like the great lama of the Tartars. He was busily employed in cutting out coats and garments; not, however, like Dorcas, for the poor—nor, indeed, did they seem intended for any mortal whatever, so ill were they adapted to the shape of the human body. Some of the garments were extravagantly large,

others as preposterously small: of others, it was difficult to guess to what part of the person they were meant to be applied. Here were coverings, which did not cover; ornaments, which disfigured; and defences against the weather, more slight and delicate than what they were meant to defend; but all were eagerly caught up, without distinction, by the crowd of votaries who were waiting to receive them.

The other officer was dressed in a white succinct linen garment, like a priest of the lower order. He moved in a cloud of incense more highly scented than the breezes of Arabia; he carried a tuft of the whitest down of the swan in one hand, and in the other a small iron instrument, heated red-hot, which he brandished in the air. It was with infinite concern I beheld the Graces bound at the foot of the throne, and obliged to officiate, as handmaids, under the direction of these two officers.

I now began to inquire by what laws this queen governed her subjects, but soon found her administration was that of the most arbitrary tyrant ever known. Her laws are exactly the reverse of those of the Medes and Persians; for they are changed every day, and every hour: and what makes the matter still more perplexing, they are in no written code, nor even made public by proclamation: they are only promulgated by whispers, an obscure sign, or turn of the eye, which those only who have the happiness to stand near the queen can catch with any degree of precision: yet the smallest transgression of the laws is severely punished; not indeed by fines or imprisonment, but by a sort of interdict similar to that which in superstitious times was laid by the Pope on

disobedient princes, and which operated in such a manner that no one would eat, drink, or associate with the forlorn culprit, and he was almost deprived of the use of fire and water.

This difficulty of discovering the will of the goddess occasioned so much crowding to be near the throne, such jostling and elbowing of one another, that I was glad to retire and observe what I could among the scattered crowd: and the first thing I took notice of was various instruments of torture which every where met my eyes. Torture has, in most other governments of Europe, been abolished by the mild spirit of the times; but it reigns here in full force and terror. I saw officers of this cruel court employed in boring holes with red-hot wires, in the ears, nose, and various parts of the body, and then distending them with the weight of metal chains, or stones, cut into a variety of shapes; some had invented a contrivance for cramping the feet in such a manner that many are lamed by it for their whole lives. Others I saw, slender and delicate in their form and naturally nimble as the young antelope, who were obliged to carry constantly about with them a cumbrous unwieldy machine, of a pyramidal form, several ells in circumference.

But the most common and one of the worst instruments of torture, was a small machine armed with fish-bone and ribs of steel, wide at top but extremely small at bottom. In this detestable invention the queen orders the bodies of her female subjects to be inclosed: it is then, by means of silk cords, drawn closer and closer at intervals, till the unhappy victim can scarcely breathe; and they have found the exact point that can be borne without fainting, which, however, not unfrequently happens. The

flesh is often excoriated, and the very ribs bent, by this cruel process. Yet what astonished me more than all the rest, these sufferings are borne with a degree of fortitude which, in a better cause, would immortalize a hero or canonize a saint. The Spartan who suffered the fox to eat into his vitals, did not bear pain with greater resolution: and as the Spartan mothers brought their children to be scourged at the altar of Diana, so do the mothers here bring their children,—and chiefly those whose tender sex one would suppose excused them from such exertions,—and early inure them to this cruel discipline. But neither Spartan, nor Dervise, nor Bonze, nor Carthusian monk, ever exercised more unrelenting severities over their bodies, than these young zealots: indeed the first lesson they are taught, is a surrender of their own inclinations and an implicit obedience to the commands of the Goddess.

But they have, besides a more solemn kind of dedication, something similar to the rite of confirmation. When a young woman approaches the marriageable age, she is led to the altar: her hair, which before fell loosely about her shoulders, is tied up in a tress, sweet oils drawn from roses and spices are poured upon it; she is involved in a cloud of scented dust, and invested with ornaments under which she can scarcely move. After this solemn ceremony, which is generally concluded by a dance round the altar, the damsel is obliged to a still stricter conformity than before to the laws and customs of the court, and any deviation from them is severely punished.

The courtiers of Alexander, it is said, flattered him by carrying their heads on one side, because he had the misfortune to have a wry neck; but all adulation is poor,

compared to what is practised in this court. Sometimes the queen will lisp and stammer,—and then none of her attendants can speak plain; sometimes she chooses to totter as she walks,—and then they are seized with sudden lameness: according as she appears half undressed, or veiled from head to foot, her subjects become a procession of nuns, or a troop of Bacchanalian nymphs. I could not help observing, however, that those who stood at the greatest distance from the throne were the most extravagant in their imitation.

I was by this time thoroughly disgusted with the character of a sovereign at once so light and so cruel, so fickle and so arbitrary, when one who stood next me bade me attend to still greater contradictions in her character, and such as might serve to soften the indignation I had conceived. He took me to the back of the throne, and made me take notice of a number of industrious poor, to whom the queen was secretly distributing bread. I saw the Genius of Commerce doing her homage, and discovered the British cross woven into the insignia of her dignity.

While I was musing on these things, a murmur arose among the crowd, and I was told that a young votary was approaching. I turned my head, and saw a light figure, the folds of whose garment showed the elegant turn of the limbs they covered, tripping along with the step of a nymph. I soon knew it to be yourself:—I saw you led up to the altar,—I saw your beautiful hair tied in artificial tresses, and its bright gloss stained with coloured dust,—I even fancied I beheld produced the dreadful instrument of torture;—my emotions increased: —I cried out, "O spare her! spare my Flora!" with so much vehemence that I awaked.

TO MISS D****.

May never less of Mirth than now,
Sit on thy smooth unclouded brow!
May never Care those furrows trace
Which might her softer lines efface!
His richest robe may Hymen wear,
His brightest torch and gayest air!
And O! where'er he builds thy bower,
May joy attend the chosen hour!
May Mirth and Youth and Pleasure meet
To scatter roses at thy feet!
Like this, may every opening year
With some new blessing fraught appear;
With sprightly hopes and wishes glow,
And promise much and more bestow!—
But what shall we forsaken do,
When Mirth and Pleasure fly with you?

ON THE BIRTH

OF

A FRIEND'S ELDEST SON.

Incipe, parve puer, risu cognoscere matrem.

Welcome little helpless stranger;
Welcome to the light of day;
Smile upon thy happy mother,
Smile, and chase her pains away.

Lift thine eyes and look around thee;
Various nature courts thy sight,
Spreads for thee her flowery carpet;
Earth was made for thy delight.

Welcome to a mother's bosom;
Welcome to a father's arms;
Heir to all thy father's virtues,
Heir to all thy mother's charms.

Joy thou bring'st, but mix'd with trouble,
Anxious joys and tender fears,
Pleasing hopes, and mingled sorrows,
Smiles of transport, dash'd with tears.

Who can say what lies before thee,
Calm or tempest, peace or strife;
With what turns of various fortune
Fate shall mark thy chequer'd life.

Who can tell what eager passions
In this little heart shall beat,
When ambition, love, or glory,
Shall invade this peaceful seat.

Who can tell how wide the branches
Of this tender plant may spread,
While beneath its ample shadow
Swains may rest, and flocks be fed.

Angels guard thee, lovely blossom,
And avert each hovering ill!
Crown thy parents' largest wishes,
And their fondest hopes fulfill.

EPITAPH ON A GOLDFINCH.

Here lieth,
aged three moons and four days, the
body of RICHARD ACANTHIS,
a young creature
of unblemished life and character.
He was taken in his callow infancy,
from under the wing
of a tender parent,
by the rough and pitiless hands
of a two-legged animal
without feathers.
Though born with the most aspiring dispositions,
and unbounded love of freedom,
he was closely confined in a grated prison,
and scarcely permitted to view those fields,
to the possession of which
he had a natural and undoubted
charter.
Deeply sensible of this infringement
of his native and inalienable rights,
he was often heard to petition for redress;
not with rude and violent clamours,
but
in the most plaintive notes
of melodious sorrow.

At length,
wearied with fruitless efforts to escape,
his indignant spirit
burst the prison which his body could not,
and left behind
a lifeless heap of beauteous feathers.
Reader,
if suffering innocence can hope for retribution,
deny not to the gentle shade
of this unfortunate captive
the natural though uncertain hope
of animating some happier form,
or trying his new-fledged pinions
in some humble Elysium;
beyond the reach of Man,
the tyrant
of this lower universe.

THE MORNING REPAST.

WHEN Apollo had left the bed of Thetis, and with his fiery horses was prancing up the eastern hills, we shook off the chains of Somnus, and having attired ourselves and performed the usual ablutions, descended into the hall of banquets. The table was covered with the finest looms of Ireland, and spread with a variety of cates well calculated to incite the lazy appetite.

Our nostrils were regaled by the grateful steams of the sun-burnt berry of Mocha, sent forth from vases formed of the precious metal of Potosi. The repast was rendered more substantial by the gifts of Ceres and of Pales, and painted vessels of porcelain were filled with the infusion of the Indian leaf, rendered more grateful by the saccharine juices of the American cane, and crowned with rich streams pressed from the milky mother of the herd.

Our company then separated to pursue their various occupations.

DESCRIPTION

OF

TWO SISTERS.

DEAR COUSIN,

Our conversation last night upon beauties, put me in mind of two charming sisters, with whom I think you must be acquainted as well as I, though they were not in your list of belles. Their charms are very different however; the youngest is generally thought the handsomest, and yet other beauties shine more in her company than in her sister's; whether it be that her gay looks diffuse a lustre on all around, while her sister's beauty has an air of majesty which strikes with awe, or that the younger sets every one she is with in the fairest light, and discovers perfections which were before concealed, whilst the elder seems only solicitous to set off her own person and throw a shade upon every one else: yet, what you will think strange, it is she who is generally preferred for a confidant; for her sister, with all her amiable qualities, cannot keep a secret.

O! what an eye the younger has, as if she could look a person through; yet modest is her countenance, even and composed her pace, and she treads so softly—"Smooth sliding without step," as Milton says. She

seldom meets you without blushing,—her sister cannot blush,—she dresses very gaily, sometimes in clouded silks, which indeed she first brought into fashion, but blue is her most becoming colour, and she generally appears in it. Now and then, she wears a very rich scarf, or sash, braided with all manner of colours.

The elder, like the Spanish ladies, dresses in black in order to set off her jewels, of which she has a greater quantity than Lady ——, and, if I might judge, much finer. I cannot pretend to give you a catalogue of them; they are of all sizes, and set in all figures: her enemies say she does well to adorn her dusky brow with brilliants, and that without them she would be but little taken notice of; but certain it is, she has inspired more serious and enthusiastic passions than her sister, whose admirers are often fops more in love with themselves than with her. A learned clergyman some time ago fell deeply in love with her, and wrote a fine copy of verses on her; and what was worst, her sister could not go into company without hearing them.

One thing they quite agree in,—not to go out of their way or alter their pace for any body. Once or twice indeed I have heard that the younger....., but it was a great while ago, and she was not so old then, and so was more complaisant. She is generally waked with a fine concert of music, the other prefers a good solo....

But see, the younger beauty looks pale and sick,—she faints,—she is certainly dying,—a slight blush still upon her cheek,—it fades, fast, fast.—She is gone, yet a sweet smile overspreads her countenance. Will she revive? Shall *I* ever see her again? Who can tell me?

A CHARACTER.

Be this Philander's praise,—a well-tuned mind,
Lofty as man, and more than woman kind;
A virgin soul which, spotless yet and bright,
Keeps all the lustre of its native white.
Virtue in him from no cold precept flow'd,
But with a vigorous, genuine ardour glow'd;
So pure his feelings and his sense so strong,
Seldom his head, his heart was never wrong;
Gentle to others, to himself severe,
And mild from pity only, not from fear.
Tender yet firm, and prudent without art,
The sweetest manners and the gentlest heart.
If in so fair a mind there reign'd a fault,
'Twas sensibility too finely wrought,
Too quickly roused, too exquisite for peace,
Too deeply thoughtful for unmingled ease.
His griefs were like his joys, too far refined
To reach the dull or touch the selfish mind;
Yet the pure sorrows that on virtue grow,
Taste of the sacred spring from which they flow.

PIC-NIC.

PRAY, mamma, what is the meaning of *pic-nic?* I have heard lately once or twice of a *pic-nic supper*, and I cannot think what it means; I looked for the word in Johnson's Dictionary and could not find it.

I should wonder if you had, the word was not coined in Johnson's time: and if it had, I believe he would have disdained to insert it among the legitimate words of the language. I cannot tell you the derivation of the phrase; I believe pic-nic is originally a cant word, and was first applied to a supper or other meal in which the entertainment is not provided by any one person, but each of the guests furnishes his dish. In a pic-nic supper one supplies the fowls, another the fish, another the wine and fruit, &c.; and they all sit down together and enjoy it.

A very sociable way of making an entertainment.

Yes, and I would have you observe that the principle of it may be extended to many other things. No one has a right to be entertained gratis in society; he must expend if he wishes to enjoy.—Conversation, particularly, is a pic-nic feast, where every one is to contribute something, according to his genius and ability. Different talents and acquirements compose the different dishes of the entertainment, and the greater variety the better; but every one must bring something, for society will not tolerate any one long who lives wholly at the expense of his

neighbours. Did not you observe how agreeably we were entertained at Lady Isabella's party last night?

Yes: one of the young ladies sung, and another exhibited her drawings; and a gentleman told some very good stories.

True: another lady who is very much in the fashionable world gave us a great deal of anecdote; Dr. R., who is just returned from the continent, gave us an interesting account of the state of Germany; and in another part of the room a cluster was gathered round an Edinburgh student and a young Oxonian, who were holding a lively debate on the power of galvanism. But Lady Isabella herself was the charm of the party.

I think she talked very little; and I do not recollect any thing she said which was particularly striking.

That is true. But it was owing to her address and attention to her company that others talked and were heard by turns; that the modest were encouraged and drawn out, and those inclined to be noisy restrained and kept in order. She blended and harmonized the talents of each; brought those together who were likely to be agreeable to each other, and gave us no more of herself than was necessary to set off others. I noticed particularly her good offices to an accomplished but very bashful lady and a reserved man of science, who wished much to be known to one another, but who would never have been so without her introduction. As soon as she had fairly engaged them in an interesting conversation she left them, regardless of her own entertainment, and seated herself by poor Mr. ——, purely because he was sitting in a corner and no one attended to him. You know that in chemical preparations two substances often require a

third, to enable them to mix and unite together. Lady Isabella possesses this amalgamating power:—this is what she brings to the pic-nic. I should add, that two or three times I observed she dexterously changed topics, and suppressed stories which were likely to bear hard on the profession or connexions of some of the company. In short, the party which was so agreeable under her harmonizing influence, would have had quite a different aspect without her. These merits, however, might easily escape a young observer. But I dare say you did not fail to notice Sir Henry B——'s lady, who was declaiming with so much enthusiasm, in the midst of a circle of gentlemen which she had drawn round her, upon the *beau ideal.*

No indeed, mamma; I never heard so much fire and feeling:—and what a flow of elegant language! I do not wonder her eloquence was so much admired.

She has a great deal of eloquence and taste: she has travelled, and is acquainted with the best works of art. I am not sure, however, whether the gentlemen were admiring most her declamation or the fine turn of her hands and arms. She has a different attitude for every sentiment. Some observations which she made upon the beauty of statues seemed to me to go to the verge of what a modest female will allow herself to say upon such subjects,—but she has travelled. She was sensible that she could not fail to gain by the conversation while beauty of form was the subject of it.

Pray what did ——, the great poet, bring to the pic-nic, for I think he hardly opened his mouth?

He brought his fame. Many would be gratified with merely seeing him who had entertained them in their

closets; and he who had so entertained them had a right to be himself entertained in that way which he had no talent for joining in.—Let every one, I repeat, bring to the entertainment something of the best he possesses, and the pic-nic table will seldom fail to afford a plentiful banquet.

LETTER

FROM

GRIMALKIN TO SELIMA.

MY DEAR SELIMA,

As you are now going to quit the fostering cares of a mother, to enter, young as you are, into the wide world, and conduct yourself by your own prudence, I cannot forbear giving you some parting advice in this important æra of your life.

Your extreme youth, and permit me to add, the giddiness incident to that period, make me particularly anxious for your welfare. In the first place then, let me beg you to remember that life is not to be spent in running after your own tail. Remember you were sent into the world to catch rats and mice. It is for this you are furnished with sharp claws, whiskers to improve your scent, and with such an elasticity and spring in your limbs. Never lose sight of this great end of your existence. When you and your sister are jumping over my back, and kicking and scratching one another's noses, you are indulging the propensities of your nature, and perfecting yourselves in agility and dexterity. But remember that these frolics are only preparatory to the grand scene of action. Life is long, but youth is short. The gaiety

of the kitten will most assuredly go off. In a few months, nay even weeks, those spirits and that playfulness, which now exhilarate all who behold you, will subside; and I beg you to reflect how contemptible you will be, if you should have the gravity of an old cat without that usefulness which alone can ensure respect and protection for your maturer years.

In the first place, my dear child, obtain a command over your appetites, and take care that no tempting opportunity ever induces you to make free with the pantry or larder of your mistress. You may possibly slip in and out without observation; you may lap a little cream, or run away with a chop without its being missed: but depend upon it, such practices sooner or later will be found out; and if in a single instance you are discovered, every thing which is missing will be charged upon you. If Mrs. Betty or Mrs. Susan chooses to regale herself with a cold breast of chicken which was set by for supper,—you will have clawed it; or a raspberry cream, —you will have lapped it. Nor is this all. If you have once thrown down a single cup in your eagerness to get out of the storeroom, every china plate and dish that is ever broken in the house, you will have broken it; and though your back promises to be pretty broad, it will not be broad enough for all the mischief that will be laid upon it. Honesty you will find is the best policy.

Remember that the true pleasures of life consist in the exertion of our own powers. If you were to feast every day upon roasted partridges from off Dresden china, and dip your whiskers in syllabubs and creams, it could never give you such true enjoyment as the commonest food procured by the labour of your own

paws. When you have once tasted the exquisite pleasure of catching and playing with a mouse, you will despise the gratification of artificial dainties.

I do not with some moralists call cleanliness a half virtue only. Remember it is one of the most essential to your sex and station; and if ever you should fail in it, I sincerely hope Mrs. Susan will bestow upon you a good whipping.

Pray do not spit at strangers who do you the honour to take notice of you. It is very uncivil behaviour, and I have often wondered that kittens of any breeding should be guilty of it.

Avoid thrusting your nose into every closet and cupboard,—unless indeed you smell mice; in which case it is very becoming.

Should you live, as I hope you will, to see the children of your patroness, you must prepare yourself to exercise that branch of fortitude which consists in patient endurance: for you must expect to be lugged about, pinched and pulled by the tail, and played a thousand tricks with; all which you must bear without putting out a claw; for you may depend upon it, if you attempt the least retaliation you will for ever lose the favour of your mistress.

Should there be favourites in the house, such as tame birds, dormice, or a squirrel, great will be your temptations. In such a circumstance, if the cage hangs low and the door happens to be left open,—to govern your appetite I know will be a difficult task. But remember that nothing is impossible to the governing mind; and that there are instances upon record of cats who, in the exercise of self-government, have overcome the strongest propensities of their nature.

If you would make yourself agreeable to your mistress,

you must observe times and seasons. You must not startle her by jumping upon her in a rude manner: and above all, be sure to sheathe your claws when you lay your paw upon her lap.

You have like myself been brought up in the country, and I fear you may regret the amusements it affords; such as catching butterflies, climbing trees, and watching birds from the windows, which I have done with great delight for a whole morning together. But these pleasures are not essential. A town life has also its gratifications. You may make many pleasant acquaintances in the neighbouring courts and alleys. A concert upon the tiles in a fine moonlight summer's evening may at once gratify your ear and your social feelings. Rats and mice are to be met with everywhere: and at any rate you have reason to be thankful that so creditable a situation has been found for you; without which you must have followed the fate of your poor brothers, and with a stone about your neck have been drowned in the next pond.

It is only when you have kittens yourself, that you will be able to appreciate the cares of a mother. How unruly have you been when I wanted to wash your face! how undutiful in galloping about the room in stead of coming immediately when I called you! But nothing can subdue the affections of a parent. Being grave and thoughtful in my nature, and having the advantage of residing in a literary family, I have mused deeply on the subject of education; I have pored by moonlight over Locke, and Edgeworth, and Mrs. Hamilton, and the laws of association: but after much cogitation I am only convinced of this, that kittens will

be kittens, and old cats old cats. May you, my dear child, be an honour to all your relations and to the whole feline race. May you see your descendants of the fiftieth generation. And when you depart this life, may the lamentations of your kindred exceed in pathos the melody of an Irish howl.

Signed by the paw of your affectionate mother,

GRIMALKIN.

PETITION OF A SCHOOLBOY

TO HIS FATHER.

Most honour'd Sir, I must confess
I never liked a letter less
Than yours, which brought this new receipt
To prove that poets must not eat.
Alas! poetic sparks require
The aid of culinary fire:
Your ancient bards, I always find,
Recited best when they had dined:
Old Homer, and your brave Greek boys,
With whom old stories make such noise,
The savoury chine loved full as well
As striking on an empty shell;
And mighty idle it was reckon'd
(See Pope's translation, book the second)
To enter upon any matter
Of verse, or business, praise, or satire,
Till the dire rage of hunger ceased,
And empty stomachs were appeased.
Indeed, Sir, with your lean philosophy,
For want of moisture I should ossify;
And therefore beg, with all submission,
To recommend a composition,

Which Phœbus' self to me reveal'd
Last night, while sleep my eyelids seal'd.
First, from the Naiad's sacred spring
The cleansing wave with reverence bring;
Be rites of due lustration paid,—
Ill-omened else, you'll ne'er succeed.
Now with pure hands receive the flower
Which Ceres from her horn will pour.
The fairest herds on Mosswold hill
Your pail with smoking streams shall fill,
Which, tortured in the whirling churn,
Shall soon to waxen butter turn,—
Butter, more sweet than morning dew,
Butter, which Homer never knew!
My friends, you have not done your task yet:
Next of fresh eggs provide a basket;
Let Betty break them in a bowl
Large as her own free-hearted soul;
Then, with a triple-tined fork
The viscous flood incessant work,
Till white with sparkling foam it rise
Like a vext sea beneath her eyes.
The monarch of the watery reign
Thus with his trident smites the main,
When roused from Ocean's deepest bed
The billows lift their frothy head,
And the wet sailor far from shore
With dashing spray is cover'd o'er.
With flying sails and falling oars,
Now speed, my friends, to distant shores,

For many a distant realm must join,
Ere we fulfill the vast design.
From islands of the Western main
Bring the sweet juices of the cane;
In bright Hesperia's groves you'll find
The lovely fruit with burnish'd rind;
Not fairer was that golden bough
Given to the pious Trojan's vow,
When the prophetic Sibyl led
To the sad nations of the dead,
Which guided through the direful scene,
And soothed the stern relentless Queen.
Strip of their bark the spicy trees
Embosom'd deep in Indian seas.
To Venus next address your prayer,
That she with rosy hand would bear
The luscious fruit to crown your toils
From Paphos and Cythera's isles.
  From every clime the tribute pour'd,
Now heap'd upon the spacious board,
Sure sister Sally will not linger
To mix them with her snowy finger.
  Fair priestess of the mystic rite,
Kept close from man's unhallow'd sight,
Fear not my verse should here disclose
What words the sacred charm compose,
When with uncover'd arms you bend,
The heterogeneous mass to blend:—
Your cakes are good, with joy I take them,
Nor ask the secret how you make them.

Now, the rich labour to complete,
Spread o'er the whole an icy sheet,
Thinner than e'er the pointed thorn,
The glazing of a winter's morn;
Too weak to bear the beams of day,
The trickling crystal melts away.
'Tis done,—consign it o'er to Bray,*
And your petitioner shall pray.

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* The Diss and Palgrave carrier.

THE RIVER AND THE BROOK:

A FABLE.

THERE was once a River which was very large, and flowed through a great extent of country which it rendered fruitful and pleasant. It was some miles broad at its mouth; it was navigable for a long way up the stream, and ships of large burthen floated on its bosom. The River, elated with its own consequence, despised all the little brooks and streams which fell into it; and swelling above its banks with pride, said to them—"Ye petty and inconsiderable streams, that hasten to lose your names and your being in my flood, how little does your feeble tribute increase my greatness! whether you withhold or bring it I feel no increase and shall perceive no diminution."

"Proud stream!" replied a little Brook which lifted up its head and murmured these words,—"dost thou not know that all thy greatness is owing to us whom thou despisest?"

The River, mindless of this reproof, in wanton pride overflowed its banks. But the next summer proving a very hot one, all the little streams were dried up, and the River was so far dried that men and cattle could wade over it; and a strong wind bringing a heap of dust across its stream, it was lost in the sands and never heard of afterwards.

THE LAMENT:

A BALLAD.

Come here, all ye virgins, and pity my case,
By a lover neglected and left in disgrace;
By a lover whose charms and whose falsehoods are such
That I neither can praise nor lament him too much.

When first seen o'er the hills of the East he drew nigh,
How beauteous his footsteps, how cheering his eye!
The lark sprung to meet him, all nature was gay,
And his bright golden hair, how it stream'd on the day.

As nearer and nearer each day then he press'd,
How quickly he thaw'd all the ice of my breast;
And the hours of his absence were never then long,
And those hours too were soothed with the nightingale's song.

O then if I sicken'd, I sicken'd of love,
For relief from his ardours I sought the cool grove;
But where did the grove, rock, or desert appear,
Which his eye did not pierce, which his smile did not cheer!

O the joys that are past! by my lover caress'd,
When my lap teem'd with wealth, the rose bloom'd on my breast;

When the poet delighted my charms to rehearse,
And a wreath from my hair was the meed of his verse.

But those moments so precious are fled with swift pace,—
For a month at a time I now scarce see his face ;
So languid his smile is, so distant his air,
My poor heart is quite sunk in the depths of despair.

My tresses are scatter'd, dishevell'd and torn,
Through the chill night I sigh, and I weep every morn ;
My charms were call'd forth by a beam from his eye,
In his absence they wither, they languish and die.

Now my strength and my youth and my beauty are gone,
My times are accomplished, my fate hastens on ;
His eye is averted, he sees not my death,—
Now my last hour approaches, I scarce draw my breath.

To a new fav'rite then he' ll his passion transfer,
And his gifts and his courtship will all be for her ;
Like me with his smiles she will kindle and glow,
And his kiss from her bosom will melt off the snow.

But like me deserted, she too will soon prove,
How transient his fervours, how fickle his love ;
And like mine, her short pageant must quickly be o'er,
For the circle she treads I have trodden before.

THE OLD YEAR.

Half-past Eleven at Night, Dec. 31.

ALLEGORY ON SLEEP.

MY DEAR MISS D****.

THE affection I bear you, and the sincere regard I have for your welfare, will I hope excuse the liberty I am going to take in remonstrating against the indulgence of a too partial affection which I see with sorrow is growing upon you every day.

You start at the imputation: but hear me with patience; and if your own heart, your own reason, does not bear witness to what I say, then blame my suspicions and my freedom.

But need I say much to convince you of the power this favoured lover, whose name I will not mention, has over you, when at this very moment he absorbs all your faculties, and engrosses every power of your mind to such a degree as leaves it doubtful whether this friendly admonition will reach your ear, lost as you are in the soft enchantment? Is it not evident that in his presence you are dead to every thing around you? The voice of your nearest friend, your most sprightly and once-loved amusements, cannot draw your attention; you breathe, you exist, only for him. And when at length he has left you, do not I behold you languid, pale, bearing in your eyes and your whole carriage the marks of his power over you? When we parted last night, did not I see you impatient to sink into his arms? Have you never been

caught reclined on his bosom, on a soft carpet of flowers, on the banks of a purling stream, where the murmuring of the waters, the whispering of the trees, the silence and solitude of the place, and the luxurious softness of every thing around you, favoured his approach and disposed you to listen to his addresses? Nay, in that sacred temple which ought to be dedicated to higher affections, has he never stolen insensibly on your mind, and sealed your ears against the voice of the preacher, though never so persuasive? Has not his influence over you greatly increased within these few weeks? Does he not every day demand, do you not every day sacrifice to him, a larger portion of your time?

Not content with your devoting to him those hours

"When business, noise, and day are fled,"

does he not encroach upon the morning watches, break in upon your studies, and detain your mind from the pursuit of knowledge and the pursuit of pleasure,—of all pleasure but the enervating indulgence of your passion?

Diana, who still wishes to number you in her train, invites you to join in her lively sports; for you Aurora bathes the new-born rose in dew, and streaks the clouds with gold and crimson; and Youth and Health offer a thousand innocent pleasures to your acceptance.

And, let me ask you, what can you find in the company of him with whom you are thus enamoured, to make you amends for all that you give up for his sake? Does he entertain you with any thing but the most incoherent rhapsodies, the most romantic and visionary tales? To believe the strange, improbable and contradictory things he tells you, requires a credulity beyond that of an infant.

If he has ever spoken truth, it is mixed with so much falsehood and obscurity, that it is esteemed the certain sign of a weak mind to be much affected with what he says.

As I wish to draw a true portrait, I will by no means disguise his good qualities; and shall therefore allow that he is a friend to the unhappy and the friendless, that his breast is the only pillow for misfortune to repose on, and that his approaches are so gentle and insinuating as in some moments to be almost irresistible. If he is at all disposed to partiality, it is in favour of the poor and mean, with whom he is generally thought to associate more readily than with the rich. Yet he dispenses favours to all: and those who are most disposed to rebel against his power and treat him with contempt, could never render themselves quite independent of him.

He is of a very ancient family, and came in long before the Conquest. He has a half-brother, somewhat younger than himself, who has made his name very famous in the world: he is a tall meagre figure, with a ghastly air and a most forbidding countenance; he delights in slaughter, and has destroyed more men than Cæsar or Alexander.

He who is the subject of my letter is fond of peace, sleek and corpulent, with a mild heavy eye and a physiognomy perfectly placid; yet with all this opposition of feature and character, there is such a resemblance between them (as often happens in family likenesses,) that in some lights and attitudes you can scarce distinguish the one from the other.

To finish the description of your lover,—he is generally crowned with flowers, but of the most languid kind, such

as poppies and cowslips; and he is attended by a number of servants, thin and light-footed, to whom he does not give the same livery; for some are dressed in the gayest, others in the most gloomy habits imaginable, but all fantastic.

He is subject to many strange antipathies, and as strange likings. The warbling of the lark, to others so agreeable, is to him the harshest discord, and Peter could not start more at the crowing of a cock. The slightest accident, the cry of an infant, a mouse behind the wainscot, will oftentimes totally disconcert and put him to flight, and at other times he will not regard the loudest thunder. His favourite animal is the dormouse, and his music the dropping of water, the low tinkling of a distant bell, the humming of bees, and the hollow sound of the wind rustling through the trees.

But I have now said enough to let you into the true character of this powerful enchanter. You will answer, I know, to all this, that he begins by enslaving every faculty that might resist him, and that his power must be already broken before Reason can exert herself. You will perhaps likewise tell me (and I must acknowledge the justice of the retort,) that I myself, though my situation affords a thousand reasons to resist him which do not take place with you, have been but too sensible of his attractions.

With blushes I confess the charge. At this moment, however, the charm is broken, and Reason has her full empire over me. Let me exhort you therefore...But why exhort you to what is already done? for if this letter has made its way to your ear, if your eye is now perusing its contents, the spell is dissolved, and you are no longer sunk in the embraces of *Sleep*.

TO *******.

OCCASIONED BY HIS POEM ON THE SUN.

While, Florio, thy young venturous Muse
  Pursues her shining way,
And like the generous eagle soars
  To meet the blaze of day;

With the fair dawn of genius charmed,
  A nobler theme I find;
I hail the intellectual morn,
  I sing the bloom of mind.

The sun which bids the ruby glow,
  And wakes the purple rose,
A richer gem did ne'er refine,
  A sweeter bud disclose.

That bud to golden fruit shall swell,
  That gem be polish'd bright,
The kindling dawn of science spread
  To clear meridian light.

When gems grow pale, and roses droop,
  And sickening suns expire,—
The mind, a ray from heaven, shall live,
  And mix with heavenly fire.

A HYMN.

LIFT up thyself, O mourning soul! lift up thyself, raise thine eyes that are wet with tears!

Why are thine eyes wet with tears? why are they bent continually upon the earth? and why dost thou go mourning as one forsaken of thy God?

O thou that toilest ever and restest not; thou that wishest ever and art not satisfied; thou that carest ever and art not 'stablished;

Why dost thou toil and wish? why is thine heart withered with care, and thine eyes sunk with watching?

Rest quietly on thy couch, steep thine eyelids in sleep, wrap thyself in sleep as in a garment,—for he careth for thee:

He is with thee, he is about thee, he compasseth thee, he compasseth thee on every side.

The voice of thy Shepherd among the rocks! he calleth thee, he beareth thee tenderly in his arms; he suffereth thee not to stray.

Thy soul is precious in his sight, O child of many hopes.

For he careth for thee in the things which perish, and he hath provided yet better things than those.

Raise thyself, O beloved soul! turn thine eyes from care, and sin, and pain; turn them to the brightness of the heavens, and contemplate thine inheritance; for thy birthright is in the skies, and thine inheritance amongst the stars of light.

The herds of the pasture sicken and die, they lie down among the clods of the valley, the foot passeth over them; they are no more. But it is not so with thee.

For the Almighty is the father of thy spirit, and he hath given thee a portion of his own immortality.

Look around thee and behold the earth, for it is the gift of thy Father to thee and to thy sons, that they should possess it.

Out of the ground cometh forth food; the hills are covered with fresh shade; and the animals, thy subjects, sport among the trees.

Delight thyself in them, for they are good; and all that thou seest is thine.

But nothing that thou seest is like unto thyself; thou art not of them, nor shalt thou return to them.

Thou hast a mighty void which they cannot fill; thou hast an immortal hunger which they cannot satisfy: they cannot nourish, they cannot support, they are not worthy that they should occupy thee.

As the fire which while it resteth on the earth yet sendeth forth sparks continually towards heaven; so do thou from amidst the world send up fervent thoughts to God.

As the lark, though her nest is on the low ground, as soon as she becometh fledged, poiseth her wings, and finding them strong to bear her through the light air, springeth up aloft, singing as she soars;

So let thy desires mount swiftly upwards, and thou shalt see the world beneath thy feet.

And be not overwhelmed with many thoughts. Heaven is thine, and God is thine: thou shalt be blessed with everlasting salvation and peace upon thy head for evermore.

ON FRIENDSHIP.

FRIENDSHIP is that warm, tender, lively attachment which takes place between persons in whom a similarity of tastes and manners, joined to frequent intercourse, has produced an habitual fondness for each other. It is not among our duties, for it does not flow from any of the necessary relations of society; but it has its duties when voluntarily entered into. In its highest perfection it can only, I believe, subsist between two; for that unlimited confidence and perfect conformity of inclinations which it requires, cannot well be found in a larger number: besides, one such friendship fills the heart, and leaves no want or desire after another.

Friendship, where it is quite sincere and affectionate, free from affectation or interested views, is one of the greatest blessings of life. It doubles our joys, and it lessens our sorrows, when we are able to pour both into the bosom of one who takes the tenderest part in all our interests, who is to us as another self. We love to communicate all our feelings; and it is in the highest degree grateful where we can do it to one who will enter into them all; who takes an interest in every thing that befalls us; before whom we can freely indulge even our little weaknesses and foibles, and show our minds as it were undrest; who will take part in all our schemes, advise

us in any emergency; who rejoices in our company, and who, we are sure, thinks of us in our absence.

With regard to the choice of friends, there is little to say; for a friend was never chosen. A secret sympathy, the attraction of a thousand nameless qualities; a charm in the expression of the countenance, even in the voice, or the manner, a similarity of circumstances,—these are the things that begin attachment, which is fostered by being in a situation which gives occasion for frequent intercourse; and this depends upon chance. Reason and prudence have, however, much to do in restraining our choice of improper or dangerous friends. They are improper if our line of life and pursuits are so totally different as to make it improbable we shall long keep up an intimacy, at least without sacrificing to it connexions of duty; they are dangerous if they are in any respect vicious.

It has been made a question whether friendship can subsist amongst the vicious. If by vicious be meant those who are void of the social, generous, and affectionate feelings, it is most certain it cannot; because these make the very essence of it. But it is very possible for persons to possess fine feelings, without that steady principle which alone constitutes virtue; and it does not appear why such may not feel a real friendship. It will not indeed be so likely to be lasting, and is often succeeded by bitter enmities.

The duties of friendship are, first, sincere and disinterested affection. This seems self-evident: and yet there are many who pretend to love their friends, when at the same time they only take delight in them, as we delight in a fine voice or a good picture. If you love your friend,

you will love him when his powers of pleasing and entertaining you have given way to malady or depression of spirit; you will study *his* interest and satisfaction, you will be ready to resign his company, to promote his advantageous settlement at a distant residence, to favour his connexion with other friends;—these are the tests of true affection: without such a disposition, you may enjoy your friend but you do not love him.

Next, friendship requires pure sincerity and the most unreserved confidence. Sincerity every man has a right to expect from us, but every man has not a right to our confidence: this is the sacred and peculiar privilege of friendship; and so essential is it to the very idea of this connexion, that even to serve a friend without giving him our confidence, is but going half way;—it may command gratitude, but will not produce love. Above all things, the general tenour of our thoughts and feelings must be shown to our friends exactly as they are; without any of those glosses, colourings, and disguises which we do, and partly must put on in our commerce with the world.

Another duty resulting from this confidence is inviolable secrecy in what has been entrusted to us. To every one indeed we owe secrecy in what we are formally entrusted with; but with regard to a friend, this extends to the concealing every thing which in the fullness of his heart and in the freedom of unguarded conversation he has let drop, if you have the least idea it may in any manner injure or offend him. In short, you are to consider yourself as always, to him, under an implied promise of secrecy; and should even the friendship dissolve, it would be in the highest degree ungenerous to consider this obligation as dissolved with it.

In the next place, a friend has a right to our best advice on every emergency; and this, even though we run the risk of offending him by our frankness. Friends should consider themselves as the sacred guardians of each other's virtue; and the noblest testimony they can give of their affection is the correction of the faults of those they love. But this generous solicitude must be distinguished from a teazing, captious, or too officious notice of all the little defects and frailties which their close intercourse with each other brings continually into view: these must be overlooked or borne with; for as we are not perfect ourselves, we have no right to expect our friends should be so.

Friends are most easily acquired in youth, but they are likewise most easily lost: the petulance and impetuosity of that age, the eager competitions and rivalships of an active life, and more especially the various changes in rank and fortune, connexions, party, opinions, or local situations, burst asunder or silently untwist the far greater part of those friendships which, in the warmth of youthful attachment, we had fondly promised ourselves should be indissoluble.

Happy is he to whom, in the maturer season of life, there remains one tried and constant friend: their affection, mellowed by the hand of time, endeared by the recollection of enjoyments, toils, and even sufferings shared together, becomes the balm, the consolation, and the treasure of life. Such a friendship is inestimable, and should be preserved with the utmost care; for it is utterly impossible for any art ever to transfer to another the effect of all those accumulated associations which endear to us the friend of our early years.

These considerations should likewise induce us to show a tender indulgence to our friends, even for those faults which most sensibly wound the feeling heart,—a growing coldness and indifference. These may be brought on by many circumstances, which do not imply a bad heart; and provided we do not by bitter complaints and an open rupture preclude the possibility of a return, in a more favourable conjuncture the friendships of our youth may knit again, and be cultivated with more genuine tenderness than ever.

I must here take occasion to observe, that there is nothing young people ought to guard against with more care than a parade of feeling, and a profusion of exaggerated protestations. These may sometimes proceed from the amiable warmth of a youthful heart; but they much oftener flow from the affectation of sentiment, which is both contemptible and morally wrong.

All that has been said of the duties or of the pleasures of friendship in its most exalted sense, is applicable in a proportionate degree to every connexion in which there exists any portion of this generous affection: so far as it does exist in the various relations of life, so far it renders them interesting and valuable; and were the capacity for it taken away from the human heart, it would find a dreary void, and starve amidst all the means of enjoyment the world could pour out before it.

CONFIDENCE AND MODESTY:

A FABLE.

When the Gods, knowing it to be for the benefit of mortals that the few should lead and that the many should follow, sent down into this lower world Ignorance and Wisdom, they decreed to each of them an attendant and guide, to conduct their steps and facilitate their introduction. To Wisdom they gave Confidence, and Ignorance they placed under the guidance of Modesty. Thus paired, the parties travelled about the world for some time with mutual satisfaction.

Wisdom, whose eye was clear and piercing, and commanded a long reach of country, followed her conductor with pleasure and alacrity. She saw the windings of the road at a great distance; her foot was firm, her ardour was unbroken, and she ascended the hill or traversed the plain with speed and safety.

Ignorance, on the other hand, was short-sighted and timid. When she came to a spot where the road branched out in different directions, or was obliged to pick her way through the obscurity of the tangled thicket, she was frequently at a loss, and was accustomed to stop till some one appeared, to give her the necessary information, which the interesting countenance of her companion seldom failed to procure her.

Wisdom in the mean time, led by a natural instinct, advanced towards the temple of Science and Eternal Truth. For some time the way lay plain before her, and she followed her guide with unhesitating steps: but she had not proceeded far before the paths grew intricate and

entangled; the meeting branches of the trees spread darkness over her head, and steep mountains barred her way, whose summits, lost in clouds, ascended beyond the reach of mortal vision. At every new turn of the road her guide urged her to proceed; but after advancing a little way, she was often obliged to measure back her steps, and often found herself involved in the mazes of a labyrinth which, after exercising her patience and her strength, ended but where it began.

In the mean time Ignorance, who was naturally impatient, could but ill bear the continual doubts and hesitation of her companion. She hated deliberation, and could not submit to delay. At length it so happened that she found herself on a spot where three ways met, and no indication was to be found which might direct her to the right road. Modesty advised her to wait; and she had waited till her patience was exhausted.—At that moment Confidence, who was in disgrace with Wisdom for some false steps he had led her into, and who had just been discarded from her presence, came up, and offered himself to be her guide. He was accepted. Under his auspices Ignorance naturally swift of foot, and who could at any time have outrun Wisdom, boldly pressed forward, pleased and satisfied with her new companion. He knocked at every door, visited castle and convent, and introduced his charge to many a society whence Wisdom found herself excluded.

Modesty, in the mean time, finding she could be of no further use to her charge, offered her services to Wisdom. They were mutually pleased with each other, and soon agreed never to separate. And ever since that time Ignorance has been led by Confidence, and Modesty has been found in the society of Wisdom.

THE DEATH-BED.

[A little Parlour with dark Floor; a Bed with a clean Quilt, in which lies the Grandmother.]

I HAD more pain when I brought you into the world than now.

Shall I lay on more clothes?

Yes, on my feet.

Are they warmer?

No. When your father died was the greatest grief I ever knew. Well! we began life together, and lived hardly enough. I have often thought since, I could not do it again. But we loved one another. I am sure I could never have recovered his loss but for the care necessary to take for you: and one friend helped, and another friend, so I struggled through. Yet, my child, I would not live it again; the tired traveller would not measure back his steps.

If I were to live, I should grow worse and worse, deafer, and blind. I have read of a country where they keep their ancestors' mummies,—living mummies would be worse.

Your father's Bible,—your ages are all down in it,—never sell it.

I have loved you all equally....And yet I am not sure ....Poor Tommy was so long sick, and would come to nobody but me....

Jenny, you may marry the shoemaker.—And now, if I could but see my poor naughty Emma!....

You will save nothing by me but water gruel and an egg or two,—care indeed, but that produces love.

You will not quarrel for my inheritance. The Squire, —it has gone to my heart when he has said, My old mother keeps me out of my estate.—Let my ring be buried with me.

A DIALOGUE OF THE DEAD,

BETWEEN

HELEN, AND MADAME MAINTENON.

HELEN.—WHENCE comes it, my dear Madame Maintenon, that beauty, which in the age I lived in produced such extraordinary effects, has now lost almost all its power?

MAINT.—I should wish first to be convinced of the fact, before I offer to give you a reason for it.

HELEN.—That will be very easy; for there is no occasion to go any further than our own histories and experience to prove what I advance. You were beautiful, accomplished, and fortunate; endowed with every talent and every grace to bend the heart of man and mould it to your wish; and your schemes were successful; for you raised yourself from obscurity and dependence to be the wife of a great monarch.—But what is this to the influence my beauty had over sovereigns and nations! I occasioned a long ten years war between the most celebrated heroes of antiquity; contending kingdoms disputed the honour of placing me on their respective thrones; my story is recorded by the father of verse; and my charms make a figure even in the annals of mankind. You were, it is true, the wife of Louis XIV. and respected in his court; but you occasioned no wars; you

are not spoken of in the history of France, though you furnish materials for the memoirs of a court. Are the love and admiration that were paid you merely as an amiable woman to be compared with the enthusiasm I inspired, and the boundless empire I obtained over all that was celebrated, great, or powerful in the age I lived in?

MAINT.—All this, my dear Helen, has a splendid appearance, and sounds well in a heroic poem; but you greatly deceive yourself if you impute it all to your personal merit. Do you imagine that half the chiefs concerned in the war of Troy were at all influenced by your beauty, or troubled their heads what became of you, provided they came off with honour? Believe me, love had very little to do in the affair: Menelaus sought to revenge the affront he had received; Agamemnon was flattered with the supreme command; some came to share the glory, others the plunder; some because they had bad wives at home, some in hopes of getting Trojan mistresses abroad; and Homer thought the story extremely proper for the subject of the best poem in the world. Thus you became famous: your elopement was made a national quarrel; the animosities of both nations were kindled by frequent battles: and the object was not the restoring of Helen to Menelaus, but the destruction of Troy by the Greeks.—My triumphs, on the other hand, were all owing to myself, and to the influence of personal merit and charms over the heart of man. My birth was obscure, my fortunes low; I had past the bloom of youth, and was advancing to that period at which the generality of our sex lose all importance with the other; I had to do with a man of gallantry and intrigue, a monarch who had been long familiarized with

beauty, and accustomed to every refinement of pleasure which the most splendid court in Europe could afford; Love and Beauty seemed to have exhausted all their powers of pleasing for him in vain: yet this man I captivated, I fixed; and far from being content, as other beauties had been, with the honour of possessing his heart, I brought him to make me his wife, and gained an honourable title to his tenderest affection.—The infatuation of Paris reflected little honour upon you. A thoughtless youth, gay, tender, and impressible, struck with your beauty, in violation of all the most sacred laws of hospitality carries you off, and obstinately refuses to restore you to your husband. You seduced Paris from his duty, —I recovered Louis from vice; you were the mistress of the Trojan prince, I was the companion of the French monarch.

HELEN.—I grant you were the wife of Louis, but not the queen of France. Your great object was ambition, and in that you met with but a partial success:—my ruling star was love and I gave up every thing for it. But tell me, did not I show my influence over Menelaus in his taking me again after the destruction of Troy?

MAINT.—That circumstance alone is sufficient to show that he did not love you with any delicacy. He took you as a possession that was restored to him, as a booty that he had recovered; and he had not sentiment enough to care whether he had your heart or not. The heroes of your age were capable of admiring beauty, and often fought for the possession of it; but they had not refinement enough to be capable of any pure, sentimental attachment or delicate passion. Was that period the triumph of love and gallantry, when a fine woman and a

tripod were placed together for prizes at a wrestling-bout, and the tripod esteemed the more valuable reward of the two? No; it is our Clelia, our Cassandra, and Princess of Cleves that have polished mankind and taught them how to love.

HELEN.—Rather say you have lost sight of nature and the passion, between bombast on one hand and conceit on the other. Shall one of the cold temperament of France teach a Grecian how to love? Greece, the parent of fair forms and soft desires, the nurse of poetry, whose soft climate and tempered skies disposed to every gentler feeling, and tuned the heart to harmony and love!—was Greece a land of barbarians? But recollect, if you can, an incident which showed the power of beauty in stronger colours than when the grave old counsellors of Priam on my appearance were struck with fond admiration, and could not bring themselves to blame the cause of a war that had almost ruined their country:—you see I charmed the old as well as seduced the young.

MAINT.—But I, after I was grown old, charmed the young; I was idolized in a capital where taste, luxury and magnificence were at the height; I was celebrated by the greatest wits of my time, and my letters have been carefully handed down to posterity.

HELEN.—Tell me now sincerely, were you happy in your elevated fortune?

MAINT.—Alas! Heaven knows I was far otherwise: a thousand times did I wish for my dear Scarron again. He was a very ugly fellow it is true, and had but little money: but the most easy, entertaining companion in the world: we danced, laughed and sung; I spoke without fear or anxiety, and was sure to please. With Louis all

was gloom, constraint, and a painful solicitude to please —which seldom produces its effect: the king's temper had been soured in the latter part of life by frequent disappointments; and I was forced continually to endeavour to procure him that cheerfulness which I had not myself. Louis was accustomed to the most delicate flatteries; and though I had a good share of wit, my faculties were continually on the stretch to entertain him,—a state of mind little consistent with happiness or ease: I was afraid to advance my friends or punish my enemies. My pupils at St. Cyr were not more secluded from the world in a cloister than I was in the bosom of the court; a secret disgust and weariness consumed me. I had no relief but in my work and books of devotion; with these alone I had a gleam of happiness.

HELEN.—Alas! one need not have married a great monarch for that.

MAINT.—But deign to inform me, Helen, if you were really as beautiful as fame reports? for to say truth, I cannot in your shade see the beauty which for nine long years had set the world in arms.

HELEN.—Honestly, no; I was rather low, and something sunburnt: but I had the good fortune to please; that was all. I was greatly obliged to Homer.

MAINT.—And did you live tolerably with Menelaus after all your adventures?

HELEN.—As well as possible. Menelaus was a good-natured domestic man, and was glad to sit down and end his days in quiet. I persuaded him that Venus and the Fates were the cause of all my irregularities, which he complaisantly believed. Besides, I was not sorry to return home: for to tell you a secret, Paris had been

unfaithful to me long before his death, and was fond of a little Trojan brunette whose office it was to hold up my train; but it was thought dishonourable to give me up. I began to think love a very foolish thing: I became a great housekeeper, worked the battles of Troy in tapestry, and spun with my maids by the side of Menelaus, who was so satisfied with my conduct, and behaved, good man, with so much fondness, that I verily think this was the happiest period of my life.

MAINT.—Nothing more likely: but the most obscure wife in Greece could rival you there.—Adieu! you have convinced me how little fame and greatness conduce to happiness.

ON EXPENSE:

A DIALOGUE.

You seem to be in a reverie, Harriet; or are you tired with your long bustling walk through the streets of London?

Not at all, papa; but I was wondering at something.

A grown person even cannot walk through such a metropolis without meeting with many things to wonder at. But let us hear the particular subject of your admiration; —was it the height and circumference of St. Paul's, or the automatons, or the magical effect of the Panorama that has most struck you?

No, papa; but I was wondering how you who have always so much money in your pockets can go through the streets of London, all full of fine shops, and not buy things: I am sure if I had money I could not help spending it all.

As you never have a great deal of money, and it is given you only to please your fancy with, there is no harm in your spending it in any thing you have a mind to; but it is very well for you and me too that the money does not *burn* in my pocket as it does in yours.

No, to be sure you would not spend all your money in those shops, because you must buy bread and meat, but you might spend a good deal. But you walk past just as if you did not see them: you never stop to give one look. Now tell me really, papa, can you help *wishing* for all those pretty things that stand in the shop-windows?

For all! Would you have me wish for all of them? But seriously. I do walk by these tempting

shops without wishing for any thing, and indeed in general without seeing them.

Well, that is because you are a man, and you do not care for what I admire so very much.

No, there you are mistaken; for though I may not admire them so very much as you say you do, there are a vast number of things sold in London which it would give me great pleasure to have in my possession. I should greatly like one of Dollond's best reflecting telescopes. I could lay out a great deal of money, if I had it to spare, in books of botany, and natural history. Nay, I assure you I should by no means be indifferent to the fine fruit exposed at the fruit-shops; the plums with the blue upon them as if they were just taken from the tree, the luscious hot-house grapes, and the melons and pine-apples. Believe me, I could eat these things with as good a relish as you could.

Then how can you help buying them, when you have money; and especially, papa, how can you help thinking about them and wishing for them?

London is the best place in the world to cure a person of extravagance, and even of extravagant wishes. I see so many costly things here which I know I could not buy, even if I were to lay out all the money I have in the world, that I never think of buying any thing which I do not really want. Our furniture, you know, is old and plain. Perhaps if there were only a little better furniture to be had, I might be tempted to change it; but when I see houses where a whole fortune is laid out in decorating a set of apartments, I am content with chairs whose only use is to sit down upon, and tables that were in fashion half a century ago. In short, I have formed the habit of *self-government*, one of the most useful powers a

man can be possessed of. Self-government belongs only to civilized man,—a savage has no idea of it. A North-American Indian is temperate when he has no liquor; but as soon as liquor is within his reach, he invariably drinks till he is first furious and then insensible. He possesses no power over himself, and he literally can no more help it, than iron can help being drawn by the loadstone.

But he seldom gets liquor, so he has not a habit of drinking.

You are right; he has not the habit of drinking, but he wants the habit of self-control: this can only be gained by being often in the midst of temptations, and resisting them. This is the wholesome discipline of the mind. The first time a man denies himself any thing he likes and which it is in his power to procure, there is a great struggle within him, and uneasy wishes will disturb for some time the tranquillity of his mind. He has gained the victory, but the enemy dies hard. The next time he does not wish so much, but he still thinks about it. After a while he does not think of it; he does not even see it. A person of moderate fortune, like myself, who lives in a gay and splendid metropolis, is accustomed to see every day a hundred things which it would be madness to think of buying.

Yes; but if you were very rich, papa—if you were a lord?

No man is so rich as to buy every thing his unrestrained fancy might prompt him to desire. Hounds and horses, pictures and statues and buildings, will exhaust any fortune. There is hardly any one taste so simple or innocent, but what a man might spend his whole estate in it, if he were resolved to gratify it to the utmost. A nobleman may just as easily ruin himself by extravagance as a private man, and indeed many do so.

But if you were a king?

If I were a king, the mischief would be much greater; for I should ruin not only myself, but my subjects.

A king could not hurt his subjects, however, with buying toys or things to eat.

Indeed, but he might. What is a diamond but a mere toy? but a large diamond is an object of princely expense. That called the Pitt diamond was valued at 1,000,000*l.* It was offered to George the Second, but he wisely thought it too dear. The dress of the late queen of France was thought by the prudent Necker a serious object of expense in the revenues of that large kingdom; and her extravagance and that of the king's brothers had a great share in bringing on the calamities of the kingdom. As to eating, you could gratify yourself with laying out a shilling or two at the pastry-cook's; but Prince Potemkin, who had the revenues of the mighty empire of Russia at command, could not please his appetite without his dish of sterlet soup, which cost every time it was made above thirty pounds; and he would send one of his aids-de-camp an errand from Yassy to Petersburg, a distance of nearly 700 miles, to fetch him a tureen of it. He once bought all the cherries of a tree in a greenhouse at about half-a-crown a piece. The Roman empire was far richer than the Russian, and in the time of the Emperors was all under the power of one man. Yet when they had such gluttons as Vitellius and Heliogabalus, the revenue of whole provinces was hardly sufficient to give them a dinner: they had tongues of nightingales, and such kind of dishes, the value of which was merely in the expense.

I think the throat of the poor little nightingales might have given them much more pleasure than the tongue.

True: but the proverb says, The belly has no ears. In modern Rome, Pope Adrian, a frugal Dutchman, complained of the expense his predecessor Leo X. was at in peacock sausages. The expenses of Louis XIV. were of a more elegant kind;—he was fond of fine tapestry, mirrors, gardens, statues, magnificent palaces. These tastes were becoming in a great king, and would have been serviceable to his kingdom if kept within proper limits: but he could not deny himself any thing, however extravagant, that it came in his mind to wish for; and indeed would have imagined it beneath him to think at all about the expense: and therefore while he was throwing up water fifty feet high at his palaces of Versailles and Marli, and spouting it out of the mouths of dolphins and tritons, thousands of his people in the distant provinces were wanting bread.

I am sure I would not have done so to please my fancy.

Nor he neither perhaps, if he had seen them; but these poor men and their families were a great way off, and all the people about him looked pleased and happy, and said he was the most generous prince the world had ever seen.

Well, but if I had Aladdin's lamp I might have every thing I wished for.

I am glad at least I have driven you to fairyland. You might no doubt with the lamp of Aladdin, or Fortunatus' purse, have every thing you wished for; but do you know what the consequences would be?

Very pleasant, I should think.

On the contrary; you would become whimsical and capricious, and would soon grow tired of every thing. We do not receive pleasure long from any thing that is not bought with our own labour: this is one of those per-

manent laws of nature which man cannot change; and therefore pleasure and exertion will never be separated even in imagination in a well-regulated mind. I could tell you of a couple who received more true enjoyment of their fortune than Aladdin himself.

Pray do.

The couple I am thinking of lived about a century ago in one of our rich trading towns, which was then just beginning to rise by manufacturing tapes and inkle. They had married because they loved one another; they had very little to begin with, but they were not afraid, because they were industrious. When the husband had come to be the richest merchant in the place, he took great pleasure in talking over his small beginnings; but he used always to add, that poor as he was when he married, he would not have taken a thousand pounds for the table his dame and he ate their dinner from.

What! had he so costly a table before he was grown rich?

On the contrary, he had no table at all; and his wife and he used to sit close together, and place their dish of pottage upon their knees;—their knees were the table. They soon got forward in the world, as industrious people generally do, and were enabled to purchase one thing after another: first perhaps a deal table; after a while a mahogany one; then a sumptuous sideboard. At first they sat on wooden benches; then they had two or three rush-bottomed chairs; and when they were rich enough to have an arm-chair for the husband, and another for a friend, to smoke their pipes in, how magnificent they would think themselves! At first they would treat a neighbour with a slice of bread and cheese and a draught of beer; by degrees with a good joint and a pudding; and at length with

all the delicacies of a fashionable entertainment: and all along they would be able to say, "The blessing of God upon our own industry has procured us these things." By this means they would relish every gradation and increase of their enjoyments: whereas the man born to a fortune swallows his pleasures *whole*, he does not *taste* them. Another inconvenience that attends the man who is born rich is, that he has not early learned to deny himself. If I were a nobleman, though I could not buy every thing I might fancy for myself, yet playthings for you would not easily ruin me, and you would probably have a great deal of pocket-money; and you would grow up with a confirmed habit of expense and no ingenuity, for you would never try to make any thing, or to find out some substitute if you could not get just the thing you wanted. That is a very fine cabinet of shells which the young heiress showed you the other day: it is perfecly arranged and mounted with the utmost elegance, and yet I am sure she has not half the pleasure in it, which you have had with those little drawers of shells of your own collecting, aided by the occasional contributions of friends, which you have arranged for yourself and display with such triumph. And now, to show you that I do sometimes think of the pleasures of my dear girl, here is a plaything for you which I bought while you were chatting at the door of a shop with one of your young friends.

A magic-lantern!—how delightful! O, thank you, papa! Edward, come and look at my charming magic-lantern.

THE END.

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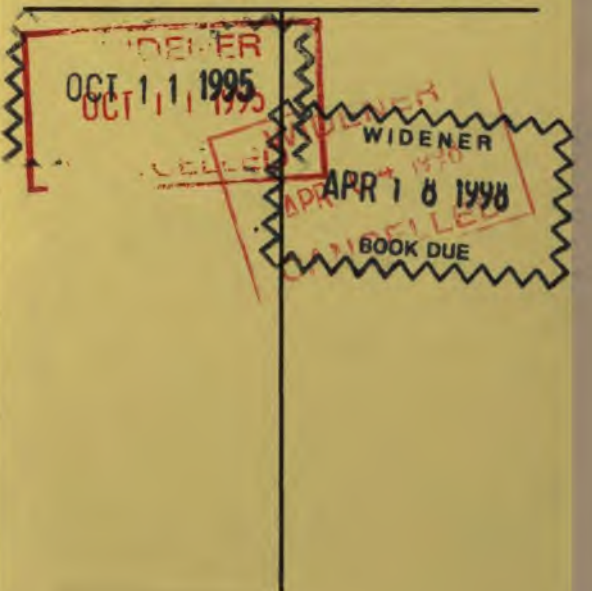
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